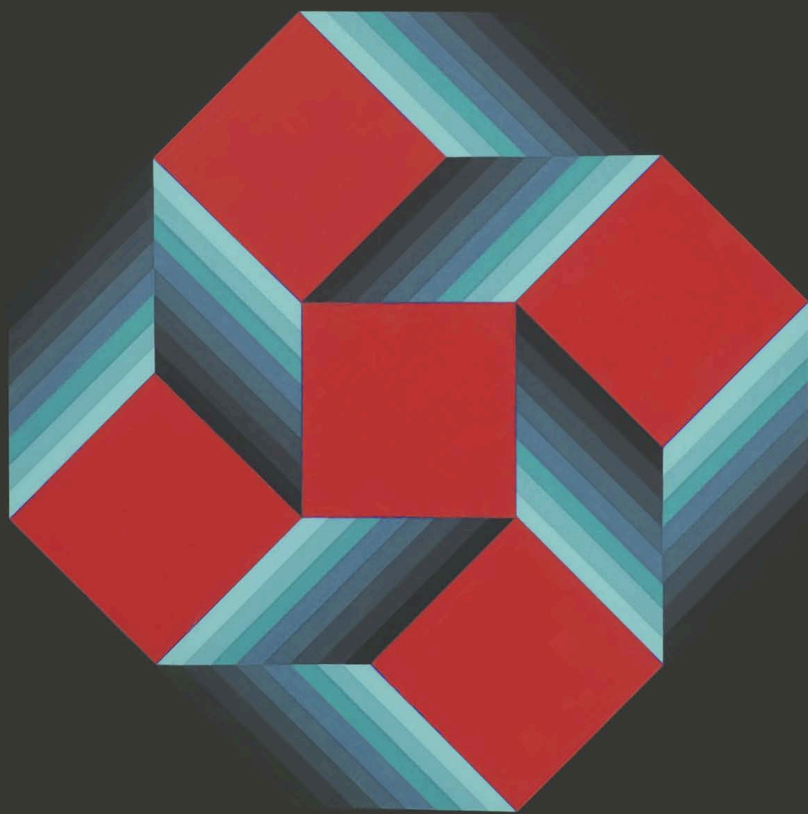


Essays on Political Doctrine



Julius Evola

JULIUS EVOLA

ESSAYS ON POLITICAL DOCTRINE

THE IMPERIAL IDEA AND THE NEW EUROPEAN ORDER

ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL CRITICISM

GERMANISM AND NAZISM



TRADITION

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PRESENTATION

This book brings together twenty-eight articles by Julius Evola published between 1930 and 1958. The division of the collection into three sections - "Imperial Idea and the New European Order", "Economy and Social Criticism", "Germanism and Nazism" - is due to the Italian editor, Renato Del Ponte, one of the leading specialists in Evola's work. It's worth noting that Evola often takes advantage of a book he reviews to indulge in analyses and developments that go far beyond the subject dealt with in the book he reviews, the latter serving only as a sort of pretext. Hence the title of this French edition of the collection, *Essais politiques*, which is certainly more explicit than a literal translation of the title chosen by the Italian publisher (*Saggi di dottrina politica*, "Essais de doctrine politique").

To be properly understood, each of the texts gathered here must be placed in the context of the period in which it was written: for this reason, following the Italian edition, the year of publication of each article is clearly indicated above the title. Taken as a whole, this collection is inseparable from Evola's other works and articles, particularly the books *Les Hommes au milieu des ruines* (2^e éd. fr. Paris-Puiseaux, 1984; original 1^{re} éd. Rome, 1953), *Le fascisme vu de droite* (Paris, 1981; original 1^{re} éd. Rome, 1964)

and, to a lesser extent, *Écrits sur la Franc- Maçonnerie* (Puisseaux, 1987; collection of eight articles published between 1937 and 1942) and his *Presentation* in Hans F. K. Günther's essay, *Religiosité indo-européenne* (Pardès, Puiseaux, 1987, pp. 17-26; 1^{re} original ed. 1934). This last text, in which Evola is at times highly critical of Günther's theses, is of special importance in that it represents the definitive state of our author's thinking - Evola, who died on June 11, 1974, wrote it in 1970 - on the Indo-European problem as it might have been approached by this researcher close to National Socialism.

Indeed, to ignore these historical and bibliographical facts would be to leave the way open to serious misunderstandings' and equivocations, which we must dispel without delay. A single example will suffice to justify our assertion. At the beginning of the article *La romanité, le germanisme et le cas Manacorda* (1941), Evola alludes favorably, without naming him, to "one of the best-known German racists", and, in a note, Renato Del Ponte specifies that this is most probably Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss (1892-1974), one of the leading exponents of "Nordic thought" in Germany in the 1920s-1940s and a close friend of Evola. Since the latter, in keeping with the vocabulary of the epoch, uses

¹ For a historical retrospective on Evola's "metapolitical" commitment to Fascism and National Socialism, from 1928 to 1945, and for an outline of a critical analysis of these two regimes from a counter-revolutionary or, better still, "integral traditionalist" point of view, cf. Philippe Baillet, *Les rapports de Julius Evola avec le fascisme et le national-socialisme*, in *Politica Hermetica*, L'Âge d'Homme, 1 ("Métaphysique et politique - René Guénon, Julius Evola"), 1987, pp. 49-71. In this study, the author has taken care to use only verified and verifiable sources, and therefore unassailable.

that, in Fascist Italy, the term "racism" (*raz- zismo*) to designate theories of race and the word "racists" (*razzisti*) to qualify race theorists - rather than, respectively, the words "raciology" and "raciologists" - the uninformed reader might think that Evola did not disdain the friendship of the most fanatical and primitive Nazi ideologues. But that's not what Clauss² is about at all.

²On the subject of Clauss, who never wanted to join the Nazi party, the following details are essential: "In 1936, when he was in charge of a course on the psychology of peoples at the University of Berlin, Clauss, in *Rasse und Charakter*, clearly criticized the National Socialist theory of race. A few months later, he resigned as editor of the magazine *Rasse*, criticising its new direction. In 1940, the Nazi party, having discovered that his main collaborator, who lived with him and from whom he refused to separate, was a Jew named Margarete Landé, multiplied its warnings and criticisms against him (...) On March 28, 1941, during a working session organized by Rosenberg's services (...), D⁶) Walter Gross, head of the *Rassenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP*, declared (...): "What is important for us now is to cast Clauss and his work into the shade even more than before, to put an end to the controversy and quite simply to kill it with silence (*totschweigen*). It will be decided in high circles how far he can be allowed to continue his scientific work". The response was swift. On February 8, 1942, events to celebrate Clauss's fiftieth birthday were banned (...) A few months later, Clauss was banned from teaching at the University of Berlin. In 1943, he was officially dismissed from his post, and automatically transferred to the Waffen-SS as a disciplinary measure. His collaborator, Margarete Landé, was discovered at a property he owned in Brandenburg. She was arrested and imprisoned in Potsdam prison, where Clauss managed to get her out. In 1945, they both fled to the West, in the face of the Russian advance" (Robert de Herte, *Profil bio-bibliographique* [sans titre] de L.F. Clauss, in *Études et Recherches*, nouvelle série, 2, 4^e trimestre 1983, p. 25). It should also be noted that the "racist" Clauss lived for several years among the Bedouins of Jordan, and wrote numerous works on the Arab world and Islam.

The first part of this collection, the most specifically doctrinal, falls into the realm of major metapolitical orientations. In other words, an area in which, according to some, still many on the "right", Evola is unbearably "unrealistic", particularly in his criticism of modern notions of "nation" and "people". This reproach was recently levelled at him by an anti-fascist intellectual, a connoisseur of counter-revolutionary thought, a specialist in modern race theorists - "Romantic" as well as "scientific" (Gobineau, Vacher de Lapouge, Chamberlain, Günther, etc.) - and author of numerous works on the European "new right", often characterized by an astonishing blend of almost "inquisitorial" meticulousness in the study of sources and a desire to "dialogue" with the adversary. Pierre-André Taguieff³ writes

³This author's works include: *La stratégie culturelle de la "Nouvelle Droite" en France (1968-1983)*, in *Vous avez dit fascismes?* (collective work), Paris, 1984, Arthaud/Montalba, pp. 13-152; *Alain de Benoist philosophe*, in *Les Temps Modernes*, 451, February 1984, pp. 1439-1478. As far as "dialogue" is concerned, it is probable that P. A. Taguieff, having taken a great deal of interest in a current of thought that is in the minority but anxious for respectability and to see itself in some way "recognized" by the official and dominant culture, whether academic or not, has some difficulty in grasping the "core" from which the radicality of traditionally-inspired "integral culture" derives, as it has been redefined by its most "radical" exegetes, precisely: "Integral culture (....) must be understood as the projection in perspective of an a-rational nucleus in an intellectual and historical-concrete 'zone' (...) Integral culture (...) is totally subordinate to the *choice* consisting in attaching oneself to a non-rational nucleus (...) The choice is *not* 'justifiable' by rational mediation - rationality being itself only the fraction of a totality oriented according to the 'rational'.

that [Evola's] "political proposals can seem imbued with nostalgic utopianism, and a mytho-political bricolage entirely devoid of any basis in the real political field. Such a metapolitics of principles - he adds - too often resembles a grand petition of principle, and is reduced to the definition of the ideal regime, doomed to be missed by all its empirico-historical incarnations, betrayed because translated"⁴.

We'll try to show here that this remark would benefit from being considerably more nuanced, and that Evola's supposed unrealism is *sometimes* a superior realism or "realism of the idea". While he refuses to use words, since words are not things, Evola proves here, on several occasions, that he knew how to play with words. In the first part of this collection, for example, there are some semantic variations that owe nothing to chance: at times, Evola clearly reaffirms the opposition between the "imperative idea" and the "realist idea".

non-rational directions" (Francesco Ingravalle, *Appunti sulla cultura integrale*, in *Risguardo II*, Ar, Padua, 1981; tr. fr. *Culture intégrale et intuition du monde*, in *Totalité*, 14, Spring 1982, pp. 23-24). Adherence to the Idea, to the traditional worldview, insofar as it derives from a meta-rational "choice" (obviously "irrational" in the view of the heirs of the Enlightenment), from a certain "race of the mind", to use Evola's phrase, cannot be the object of "discussion": "We say then that integral culture must be (...) religious, not secular (...) religious, not secular (...) axiomatic, not critical (...) We maintain that integral culture (...) must derive from principles, not theses; from vocations, not opinions (...) That it must be founded (...) on the recognition of authority, not on the search for discussion" (Franco Giorgio Freda, *Elementi della cultura integrale*, in *Risguardo I*, Ar, Padua 1980; tr. fr. *Elements of integral culture*, in J. G. Malliarakis [ed.], *L'éditeur emprisonné. Soutien à Giorgio Freda*, La Librairie Française, Paris, 1985, pp. 143-144).

⁴ Pierre-André Taguieff, *Julius Evola penseur de la décadence. Une "métaphysique de l'histoire" dans la perspective traditionnelle et l'hyper-critique de la modernité*, in *Politica Hermetica*, 1, 1987, p. 12.

rial" to "imperialism" as a modern phenomenon, while at other times, skilfully adapting to the official Fascist discourse without conceding anything essential, he uses the term "imperialism" with a positive connotation. But it is above all the last article in this first part, *Sur les conditions spirituelles et structurelles de l'unité européenne* (1951)⁵ - a text contemporary with the fundamental *Orientations* (*Orientamenti*, Rome, 1950)⁶ - that we feel best illustrates Evola's superior realism.

Considering a problem that was the subject of much debate in Italian "radical right" circles at the time - which, since 1945, has always been the most "Europeanist" of its counterparts on the Old Continent - and which continues to haunt political and cultural currents hostile to both liberal capitalism and Marxist communism, Evola shows, through a line of reasoning of admirable intellectual rigor, that this unity, which on *the face of it* should be favored by so many factors, will be achieved with great difficulty, if at all, for fundamental, precisely "structural" reasons. As this is an essential issue, it's important to follow Evola's argumentation from the outset, so as to clearly identify its specificity in relation to other currents that are sometimes tempted to claim to be abusive.

⁵ Evola was to take up this article, in a reworked and, in our opinion, less rigorous form, as the sixteenth and final chapter of *Men in the Midst of Ruins*: cf. "Formes et conditions préalables de l'unité européenne", pp. 235-250 of the 2th French edition.

⁶ A new translation of *Orientations*, presented and annotated by Ph. Baillet, is due to be published by Pardès.

of his work. Evola's reasoning is articulated in eight points:

1) To take up the idea of empire in the perspective of European unity today can only have the value of a theoretical position, for Empire, as Evola reminds us, referring here to the Spanglish distinction between *Kultur* and *Zivilization*, is consistent with a period of "culture", not "civilization". Europe is in a period of the latter type, not since yesterday, but since the advent of "modern times". It follows that any Bonapartism, Caesarism or European "imperialism" can only be a counterfeit, a parody of Empire.

2) For genuine European unity to take root and endure, there must be a principle of authority at supranational level, which must necessarily transcend the political sphere in the strict sense. Where is such a principle to be found at present?

3) From an "imperial" perspective, European unity cannot simply be identified with the dissolution of historical nations into a single nation, a kind of European magma, heterogeneous and invertebrate, but requires the organic integration of each nation as part of a whole endowed with superior legitimacy. To refer to the imperial idea and, at the same time, to wish to move from "small nationalisms" to a European "great nationalism", is indeed contradictory (Evola thus criticizes in advance the theses that would be upheld at the beginning of the following decade, and to which we shall refer later).

4) An "imperial" Europe truly worthy of the name cannot be based on the criteria - deemed "ultimate" by some - of the existential and political distinction between friend and foe and the pure biological imperative.

survival (Evola's condemnation of the purely Machiavellian conception of politics, on the one hand, and of racism as the *self-affirmation* of the race to which one belongs, on the other). To stick to these criteria, says Evola, is to remain on the level of "collectivizing 'totalitarian' processes (...) whose closest and most coherent realization is to be found today in Stalinism"; it means admitting from the outset that Europe will become "an ersatz of its adversaries in terms of confrontations determined by a brutal desire for existence and power, while waiting for the general factors of disintegration, proper to technico-mechanical civilization, to make their effect felt".

5) "The soul of a supranational European bloc should be religious": but since Evola did not believe in the possibility of a new Catholic Europe, and even less in a "generic Christianity" as a potential unifying factor, the question of the religious legitimacy of a united Europe, after a centuries-long process of desacralization, remains entirely open.

6) Is there really such a thing as a "differentiated European culture" that can effectively oppose the American and Soviet "models"? No, answers Evola, who adds that "if we can rightly consider certain aspects of North American and Russo-Bolshevik civilization as barbaric and anti-European, we must not lose sight of all that is, in both, nothing but the development taken to extremes of tendencies and evils that first appeared in Europe. This is precisely the reason for the permeability of the latter to the influences of the former" (Evola thus rejects all explanations of European decadence in the form of *alibis*: the primary fact is not constituted by the "enne-

It's not so much the "enemy within", the "enemy without", the "enemy within us". This enemy has a name: it's called "modernity". To systematically accuse, for example, "Californian by-products", instead of asking why they spread so easily among the peoples of Western Europe, is to confuse watchword and analysis).

7) Logical consequence of the previous point: "In concrete terms, the 'European tradition' understood as culture currently has no content other than the subjective and more or less divergent interpretations of fashionable intellectuals and scholars". This is not the way to unify a continent.

8) Are there still men capable of assuming this double imperative: to operate the "progressive and effective overcoming" of all that relates to an epoch of "civilization"; to forge "a kind of 'metaphysics' capable of justifying a principle (...) of pure authority".

When we remember that the text we've been recalling was written in 1951, and when we note, as we're forced to, that it hasn't aged a day, we come to doubt Evola's "unrealism". Certainly, if "realism", political or otherwise, consists in lulling the reader with illusions, in waving watchwords all the more rhetorical for covering up nothing solid, then there's no doubt that Evola is supremely unrealistic. Conversely, if "realism" consists in seeing evil right down to its roots, as a prerequisite for any real cure, and in analyzing in depth the features of the "historical landscape" which any action must take into account if it is to be effective, then Evola can be said to be a genuine realist. But politicians and "realists" of all stripes can't like Evola, because they don't like him.

metaphysics. It's true that they're not alone in this, as St. Thomas taught us this apparent paradox: that which is most universal is only loved and known by the very few, while the many take only the accidental and the individual. This is a pity, not for metaphysics, but for "realists", who could avoid wasting time and energy by practicing a little principled science. Having reduced reality to what they perceive of it, i.e. to its crudest and least intelligible modalities when considered in themselves, detached from the higher causes from which they derive, "realists" are incapable of truly embracing the order of contingency, and those who willingly present themselves as "disenchanted" Machiavellians, highly sensitive to conflictuality and power relations between individuals and peoples, are not always the last to nurture the most foolish illusions.

Among these is the idea that the unity of Europe, for want of a spiritual or genuinely political foundation, will be achieved by the sheer force of things ("things" here referring to the all-powerful imperatives of trade). As far back as 1924, René Guénon wrote the following about the wider problem of an eventual understanding between East and West, which applies *a fortiori* to the question of European unity: "It is not the facilitations brought by mechanical inventions to external relations between peoples that will ever give them the means to better understand each other (...) as for agreements based on purely commercial interests, one should know only too well what value should be attributed to them. Matter is, by its very nature, a principle of division and separation.

what proceeds from it cannot serve to found a real and lasting union, and besides, incessant change is the law here"⁷.

Let's return to the 1951 article and the question of a New European and Imperial Order, around which the texts in the first part of this collection revolve. By underlining what separates the imperial idea from a more or less Jacobin conception of Europe, from Europe as a "great nation" in the era of continental blocs, on the one hand, and by denying the existence, today, of a "differentiated European culture", on the other, Evola unwittingly designated two of the fracture points that were to enable the "traditionalist inté-

⁷ René Guénon, *Orient et Occident* (1924), Vége, Paris, 1976, p. 124. At exactly the same time, Abel Bonnard, on his return from a trip to China in 1920-1921, was developing considerations very similar to Guénon's on the difference between traditional unity and modern uniformity, favored by communication techniques: "What is lost is all that man had acquired, conquered over himself, all that was hierarchy, morals, discipline, and what remains instead is the monotony of appetites. The truth is, certain distinctive characteristics cannot be erased, as nature has imprinted them too deeply on the races. It is not the differences that disappear, but the variety, that is to say the peaceful, aesthetic, happy expression of these differences; they remain only in what they have of rough and ungrateful (...) Faster communications have shortened all distances, but we have never seen so well that certain factors, whatever their destructive power, are incapable of creating anything, in the order that exceeds them. These entanglements of interests, from which we lazily expected so many results for morals, have only succeeded in making neighbors more enemies. Le monde s'unifie, il ne s'unie pas" (*En Chine*, Fayard, Paris, 1924, p. 342). This convergence of views between Guénon and Bonnard is no coincidence, since the latter knew and greatly appreciated the former's work: cf. Guénon's letter to his friend De Giorgio, in which Guénon quotes an excerpt from a glowing review of *L'homme et son devenir selon le Vêdânta* given by Bonnard to the *Journal des Débats*. This extract appears in: Guido De Giorgio, *L'Instant et l'Éternité et autres textes sur la Tradition*, Archè, Milan, 1987, p. 257.

gral", much later, to define its specific physiognomy, clearly irreducible to both the variants of "Europeanist" neo-fascism and the more recent "new right".

The Jacobin conception of Europe was reaffirmed by the Belgian Jean Thiriart in a book published in 1964 (despite the presence of the word "empire" in the title)⁸. Written with force and talent, and rapidly translated into the main European languages, Thiriart's work exerted a fairly profound influence on the "cadres" of Belgian, French, Spanish and, above all, Italian neo-fascism, those most eager to break with the classic far right. In Italy, Thiriart's theses struck a chord with circles that had been strongly influenced by Evola's work: they appealed to them for their geopolitical lucidity, but left them perplexed by their essentially modern premises. The alliance did not last: from 1969 onwards, the most radical Italian traditionalists - sometimes unfaithful to Evola in terms of their political orientations and their regrettable propensity to leave Evola's work to their own devices - began to take an interest in Evola's work.

⁸ Cf. Jean Thiriart, *Un empire de 400 millions d'hommes: l'Europe*, Brussels, 1964. Thiriart's Jacobin, unitarian conception of the nation is particularly perceptible in a brochure with a significant title: *La Grande Nation. L'Europe de Brest à Bucarest*, Brussels, 1965. But it was undoubtedly with his magazine *La Nation Européenne* (30 issues published from October 1965 to February 1969) that Thiriart left a lasting mark: his theses in favor of a Third Worldist "Europeanism" and his virulent anti-Americanism (the United States is identified with "Carthage", the future united and free Europe with "Rome") foreshadowed several years in advance the "anti-Westernist" turn of the French "New Right", although there is no direct filiation between Thiriart and the latter. Evola alludes briefly to Thiriart's book in *Les Hommes au milieu des ruines*, cit. pp. 236, 238. The most comprehensive study of the subject to date is by Yannick Sau-veur, *Jean Thiriart et le national-communautarisme européen*, Mémoire pour le D.E.A., I.E.P. de l'Université de Paris, 1978.

lulled by the siren song of the "Nazi myth" - at once critical and "ennobled", but orthodox in doctrine - are self-critical and violently denounce the "Europeanist" idea, seen as a collection of rhetorical formulas designed to conceal the cruel reality that the Europe they seek to unite and defend, at all costs, *for its own sake*, has been the hotbed of all modern infections⁹.



In the second part of this collection, Evola deals with far more contingent issues. There is, however, a valuable article, *Corporations and Laws of Honor* (1936), on a subject that has hitherto not been the subject of serious study in French: the National Socialist conception of the corporation and the enterprise in their relationship to labor legislation.

⁹ "We fought for European hegemony (...) without considering that this Europe had become a slave to the USA and the USSR, because the nations and peoples of Europe had absorbed - following military defeat, but not as a consequence of that defeat - the ideological exports of the USA and the USSR (...). The time has come to stop toying with the puppet "Europe" and to gargle in its name (...) [Europe] is a whore, whose womb conceived and engendered bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolt (...) And we, now, would like to redeem her, whispering magic words to her: telling her, for example, that she must give herself to "Europeans" exclusively... from Brest to Bucharest?! We raised the flag of Europe without understanding that it could not represent for us any valid and homogeneous meaning: without seeing how many threads and knots its torn fabric was composed of, and how much excrement it hid" (Franco Giorgio Freda, *La disinte- grazione del sistema*, Ar, Padova, 1969; tr. fr. *La désintégration du système*, ed. Totalité, Paris, 1980, pp. 17-18).

vail. We can also see from Evola's articles on him that the essential point of anti-bourgeoisism could sometimes give rise to debates of a certain theoretical quality among fascist intellectuals. For the rest, Evola reiterates his condemnation of all kinds of "national socialism" and pseudo-revolutionary fads about "social justice", stressing that the most important thing is to detoxify one's mind of all forms of economism, whether overt or covert. His conclusions are sometimes very close to those of Céline, though expressed much more drastically: "Greedy proletarian guts versus contracted bourgeois guts. It's the whole mystique of democracy (...). Class consciousness is nonsense, a demagogic convention. Every worker wants nothing more than to get out of his working class, to become a bourgeois, as individually as possible, as quickly as possible"¹⁰.

The presentation of the third part of the book, "Germanism and Nazism", would theoretically require "that we first draw the ritual magic circle and pronounce the customary exorcisms: that is, that we repeat - with a few variations, if necessary - the preliminary and 'obvious' formula of condemnation".

¹⁰ Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *L'école des cadavres*, Denoël, Paris, 1938 pp. 128-129.

¹¹ Franco Cardini, *Il pifferaio incantato. Messianismo hideriano, mito-*

We won't do so here, and we'll explain why, at the risk of "being seen as an accomplice, a sympathizer of the enemy of man"¹², since it turns out that "the modern world does not consider (...) Hider as any kind of enemy", but "has elevated him to the rank of metaphysical enemy"¹³.

We believe, in fact, with the author we have just quoted, that "in history (...) rehabilitations - like exaltations, condemnations and justifications - are a false problem"¹⁴. The man who wrote these lines is not a "swastika nostalgist", but a Catholic, also one of Italy's leading medievalists, a man classified rather "to the right", admittedly, but who frequently collaborates with left-wing journals: Professor Franco Cardini, from the University of Florence.

But the essential point lies elsewhere. For a long time now, in all Western countries, and particularly in France, where it often takes on truly pathological forms, we've been observing a singular phenomenon: the people who keep repeating to us in every tone, from scholarly to propagandistic, that "the sleep of reason has engendered monsters" (Nazism and - incidentally from the point of view of those we're talking about - Stalinism), are also the ones, most of the time, who proceed to an obsessive demonization of National Socialism. As if

poietica nazionalsocialista e angoscia contemporanea, in *Intervento*, 29, Jan.-Feb. 1978; tr. fr. *Le joueur de flûte enchantée. Messianisme hitlérien, mythopoïétique nationale-socialiste et angoisse contemporaine*, in *Totalité*, 12, Summer 1981, p. 36.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 37.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 35.

the latter was *intrinsically* irreducible to any "comprehensive" interpretation, in the etymological sense of the term: i.e., capable of integrating and accounting for the extreme complexity and many contradictory aspects of this phenomenon. Apart from the "armed arm of capital" once proposed by orthodox Marxism, but now out of fashion, we're spoilt for choice if we want to stigmatize the "explanations" that explain nothing. They all revolve around the idea of the Austrian "sorcerer" who "bewitched" an entire people of ancient culture to establish the "evil empire", whether in the register of occultism or in that of a more or less Jungian psychoanalysis. But the strangest thing is that, as soon as passions flare up again, this last "explanation" is sometimes taken up by certain "rationalist" heirs of the Enlightenment.

Sheer ignorance plays a not inconsiderable role in all this, especially in France. We had to wait fifty-six years for a complete French translation of Rosenberg's *Mythus (Le mythe du XX^e siècle. Bilan des combats culturels et spirituels de notre temps*, Avalon, Paris, 1986), and it is not, as would have been relatively logical, a critical edition by an "official" and competent historian; there is not a single study of any significance in French on *Y Ahnenerbe*, the SS cultural institute, nor on Nazi theorists such as Ernst Krieck and Alfred Bäumler; the name of Hans F. K. Günther, who appeared here and there a few years ago in connection with polemics on the interpretation of the Indo-European problem, has almost been forgotten, while authors such as Herman Wirth, L. F. Clauss, Bernhard Kummer, etc., are almost entirely forgotten, are almost totally-

Even "classics" of official historiography have only been available in French for a very short time: this is the case, for example, of Martin Broszat's *Der Staat Hitlers* (Munich, 1969) (*L'État hitlérien*, Fayard, Paris, 1986) and Karl Dietrich Bracher's *Die deutsche Diktatur* (Cologne, 1969) (*La dictature allemande*, Privat, Toulouse, 1986), the record having been set by Franz Neumann's *Behemot. Structure and Practice of National-Socialism* (Toronto, 1942), which only waited forty-five years (!) to be translated: *Behemoth. Structure and Practice of National-Socialism* (Payot, Paris, 1987).

And ignorance, as everyone knows, breeds fear, and fear feeds fantasies. In truth, there's a lot to be said for the troubled and deeply unhealthy relationship between a certain rhetorical anti-Nazism and the object it claims to abhor. The same phenomenon can be observed, symmetrically, with a certain neo-Nazism (we're talking about people born after 1945, and often very young), in which what ignorant journalists take for "nostalgia" is in reality nothing more than the "return of the repressed" of the modern democratic conscience, the fascination for that which is adorned with the charms of the forbidden and the transgressive. In both cases, we can see that there is often, and significantly, almost total ignorance of what we claim to be talking about, in order to indulge in ritual execration or, conversely, apologetic venting. The potentially "religious" but parodic dimension of National Socialism is certainly no stranger to these phenomena of fascination-repulsion. This is why a *genuine* "demonological" critique of National Socialism would be of the utmost interest. However, any "demonology" above and beyond the

This shows that modern ideologies are not the best equipped to carry out such a critique. In reality, such criticism can only come from those who, by relying on traditional thought and adhering to an anti-materialist anthropology ("nature", even when understood in its broadest sense, does not exhaust man's essence), can also provide the doctrinal keys that are the only ones capable of opening up the third, "subtle" dimension of history.

The indirect role played by ignorance in the demonization of the Nazi phenomenon has already been mentioned. Before turning to the actual content of Evola's texts in the third part of this collection, however, we must mention the complementary opposite of ignorance, deliberate bad faith with a very specific aim: ideological disqualification, cultural delegitimization. A truly emblematic example of this process - both in terms of the personality using the process and the work targeted by it - was recently offered to us. A few months ago, Umberto Eco, now a world-famous writer who needs no introduction, published an article in the weekly *L'Espresso* with the provocative and vulgar title *Ammazza l'ebreo!* ("Kill the Jew!" or "Death to the Jew!"). After quoting some fifty lines from Evola's introduction to the 1937 Italian edition of the *Protocols of the Elder Sages of Zion*, Eco wrote: "We know how much the 'Protocols' counted towards gassing six million Jews. The man who wrote these lines is a sad and foolish (*dissennato*) character called Julius Evola, whom the New Right in recent years has repropounded as an important thinker, while certain imbeciles on the New Left have admitted that at the

(I should point out that the pages I've quoted are among Evola's most rational, most of the rest being operetta occultism, of which the magician Otelma [?] would be ashamed)"¹⁵.

An encyclopedically erudite author, familiar with the classics of counter-revolution and even with the main representatives of traditional thought, including Evola's work, Eco has no excuse here other than to want to be one of the last defenders of the "*no man's land* where the barrage of the fascism/antifascism polemic has been sterilely criss-crossing for forty years"¹⁶. But we must respond, again and again,

¹⁵ Umberto Eco, *Ammazza l'ebreo!* in *L'Espresso*, April 12, 1987; quoted in: Anonymous [Marco Tarchi], *Spezzare Tomertà*, in *Diorama letterario*, 103, April 1987, p. 2. With regard to 'l'occultisme d'opérette', Eco is opposed by the radically different judgment of another well-known writer, Marguerite Yourcenar, who, reporting on the first French ed. of Evola's *Yoga tantrique*, wrote: "J'acquis là [l'éd. in Florence, 1952] one of those works that for years nourish you and, up to a point, transport you (...) It is one of Evola's great merits to combine a prodigious wealth of erudite detail with the gift of isolating from their local conditioning ideas or disciplines that are valid for us all, and to abolish even the notion of exoticism". Before describing Evola as an "erudite genius" (an expression he would doubtless not have appreciated, but that's another matter), Yourcenar had only this reservation: "Evola, like Malaparte, seems to have belonged to that type of Germanized Italians in whom there still survive who knows what gibeline obsessions" (*Des recettes pour un art du mieux-vivre*, in *Le Monde*, July 21, 1972). This judgment is all the more significant in that M. Yourcenar, who was no doubt aware of Evola's *political* ideas, had no sympathy for fascism: "Fascism seemed grotesque to me; I had seen the march on Rome: gentlemen from 'good families', sweating under their black shirts, and people being beaten up because they disagreed" (*Les yeux ouverts*, entretiens avec M. Galey, Le Centurion, Paris, 1981, pp. 86-87).

¹⁶ Gérard Boulanger, *Compte rendu du 2^e colloque national de "Politica Hermetica"*, in *Totalité*, 27, Spring 1987, p. 53. A case in point

without tiring, in a firm and serene manner, in the open air of calumny, without wishing to conceal the darker sides. In the text that provoked Umberto Eco's carefully calculated ire, for example, we find the following in the middle of a sequence on Judaism in culture: "Jew, Tzara, creator of Dadaism, extreme limit of the disintegration of avant-garde art"¹⁷: a remark that may seem unsympathetic, a useless concession to propaganda discourse, especially when we know that Evola had known Tzara well in his youth. But we also find the following considerations, which, while certainly not indicative of any kind of philoJudaism, show just how much separated Evola from the "conspiratorial" vision of the opponents of the "Jewish world conspiracy", especially if we place these lines in the fiery context of the time: "Let us immediately say

typical of the delirium aroused by the controversies surrounding Nazism: "While ideological commandos ventured to contest the gas chambers, as if to test the waters, and an Elysée candidate, blundering or betrayed by his unconscious, saw it as nothing more than a "detail", a handful of hussardinetts with massive means of expression thought it chic to take up the themes of their collaborator elders" (Bertrand Poirot-Delpech, *Quand l'intelligence conduisait au sacrifice*, in *Le Monde*, December 11 1987). Here we have some of the ingredients of "conspiratorial" fantasies: attribution to the Enemy of a highly concerted strategy (the "commandos", the "candidate" and the "hussardinetts" [pale heirs to the "hussars", no doubt?] obey a "clandestine orchestra conductor"); and the disconcerting revelation, so enormous that it is supposed to prevent any retort: today, in France, it is the ideological heirs of the Collaboration who "massively dispose of the means of expression", even though they are only a "handful"... Paraphrasing the title of Poirot-Delpech's article, we would be tempted to say, were it not for the respect due to them, that the sacrifice of the martyrs of the Resistance has unfortunately not led the histrionics of Parisianism to intelligence.

¹⁷ Julius Evola, *Introduzione ai Protocolli*, in Claudio Mutti (ed.), *Ebraicità ed Ebraismo. I Protocolli dei Savi di Sion*, Ar, Padova 1976 p. 59.

that, personally, we cannot follow, here, a certain fanatical anti-Semitism which, by seeing the Jew everywhere as *deus ex machina*, ends up being itself the victim of a kind of trap"¹⁸. Criticizing those who, like Nilus, are convinced of the existence of a Jewish conspiracy organized long ago, Evola wrote: "On the contrary, we must reduce the positive destructive action [equals : "We must think that the Jews have found a terrain already undermined by processes of decomposition and involution, whose origins go back to very remote times and are linked to a very complex chain of causes: they have used this terrain, grafting their action onto it, so to speak, accelerating the pace of these processes >>⁽¹⁹⁾. Healing, for Evola, obviously could not come from measures of repression and persecution against individuals, and the following quotation will give the reader an idea of the level he was at, even when dealing with a document as surrounded by polemics as the *Protocols*: "We know what greatness our old imperial, aristocratic and spiritual Europe had, and we know that this greatness has been destroyed. We have descended

^(ia) *Ibid*, p. 55.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 55-56. In the same perspective: "(...) far from attributing to the Jewish people the conscious direction of a world plan, as an overly fanciful anti-Semitic myth would have it, we tend to see, in a certain Jewish instinct for humiliation, degradation and dissolution, the force which, at certain historical moments, has been used for the realization of a much vaster plot, whose ultimate threads are prior to apparent events, as well as at the level where merely ethnic energies come into play" (Julius Evola, *Tre aspetti del problema ebraico*, Rome, 1936 ; quote from the 2th ed. Ar, Padua, 1978, p. 48).

The political myths of the masses are too little, their breath is short, their validity often tainted by the very evils they seek to remedy. *What is needed, on the contrary, is a complete return to the spiritual idea of the Empire*, a precise, hard, absolute determination to rebuild in a truly 'traditional' way, in all fields, and consequently, first and foremost, in that of the spirit, on which everything else depends"²⁰.

After these preliminary but indispensable considerations, the presentation of Evola's articles on Germanism and Nazism calls for only brief comment. In the article that opens this section, *Le "mythe" du nouveau nationalisme allemand* (1930), Evola gives an account of Rosenberg's *Mythus*: he does so, therefore, in the very year of the work's publication, proof of his seriousness and refusal to settle for second-hand readings. In this article, Evola already expresses a number of reservations about Rosenberg's book, but notes: "As a general rule, the concordance of several of the Hitlerian theorist's theses with those we have expounded, on the basis of integral fascism, in our *Imperialismo pagano*, is moreover singular". Evola was clearly seduced by Rosenberg's anti-Christianism, which only partially overlapped with his own, but which was in any case deemed "courageous". Five years later, the tone is completely different: in the article *Paradoxes de*

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 62. With regard to Evola's "racism" in its various fields of application and modes of expression, we refer you to Giovanni Monastra's study, *Anthropologie aristocratique et racisme: l'itinéraire de Julius Evola en terre maudite*, forthcoming in issue 2 of *Politica Hermetica*.

In a brief but radical demolition of Rosenberg's theses, accused of using the flattest, most outdated "arguments" of the Enlightenment against Christianity (the article is unsigned, but it is precisely this anonymity that allows Evola - speaking of an official author of a "friendly" nation - to truly express the essence of his thought). In the meantime, Evola had delved deeper into the work of Guénon, whose influence on his thought had greatly eclipsed that of Nietzsche. Generally speaking, the articles of the thirties are quite critical, if not very critical, of many aspects of Nazism, and not only of its paganizing tendencies. This is not the case, however, of the three articles published during the war, and there are, it seems to us, two reasons for this: 1) the outbreak of the conflict and the Italo-German alliance led Evola to harden his commitment: 2) towards the end of the thirties, Evola undoubtedly made contact with German intellectuals who were better oriented than Rosenberg, and discovered the existence in Germany of tendencies developing theses relatively close to his own. His positive remarks on Christoph Steding's book *Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur* (Evola sees in Steding "one of the best representatives of the new National Socialist political culture": however, according to some reports, which we have unfortunately not been able to verify at present, Steding's work was violently criticized in the official press of the Nazi party).

The articles published here confirm this conclusion.

sion by Pierre-André Taguieff, who is hardly suspected of being sympathetic to racist theories, but who is more honest than Umberto Eco: "For Evola, the doctrine of race has only an instrumental meaning, in that it must *lead to* (something other than itself), and can in no way have the value of a foundation (...). From Evola's "traditional" perspective, then, biological racism is merely the latest version of modern naturalism and immanentism, a mostly unconscious offshoot of the nationalist particularism inherited from the unpredictable encounter between Jacobin mysticism and scientistic dogma^{at} the end of the 19th century. As such, it embodies the push-pull synthesis par excellence: that of integral naturalism, tending towards materialist monism, and classificatory, metrological rationalism. Zoological racism is a particularly crude aspect of the reign of quantity"²¹.

It should be pointed out, by the way, that some of the expressions used here ("German race", "Germanic race") are quite inappropriate,

²¹ Pierre-André Taguieff, *Julius Evola penseur de la décadence*, art. cité, p. 30. On the subject of National Socialist paganism, this author writes that "this curious mixture of integral naturalism, anti-Christian (or anti-Biblical) fanaticism, militant scientism and nationalist particularism was first embodied in the 'world conception' of Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919), the founder of the 'monist religion' in Germany" (*ibid.*, p. 45, note 55), one of the great names of Darwinism and the father of the "fundamental biogenetic law", according to which ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. This is an important point, for it is Darwinism itself, within Nazi biological racism, that makes the latter reprehensible in Evola's eyes. Evola's radical hostility to Darwinism is a constant: already present in his early theoretical texts, it is reaffirmed in the first two chapters of his *Metaphysics of Sex* (original ed. 1958).

in Evola's writing, must obviously be related to the "journalistic" style he sometimes employed in his articles.

As a whole, therefore, while this collection provides a better understanding of Evola's itinerary, it is above all an irreplaceable source of information on the ideas discussed under Fascism and National Socialism. In the case of the latter, given the paucity of literature (in France, at least) on sources and ideological references, Evola's articles, often written from first-hand documentation, are all the more valuable. Assuming the existence of a homogeneous, articulated "Nazi ideology" - which, given the current state of research, we can legitimately doubt - readers will be able to assess, judge and, if necessary, condemn, thanks to Evola, but they will do so with (partial) full knowledge of the facts. Those who have taken the initiative of publishing these *Political Essays* by Evola have set themselves the primary objective of indirectly contributing a stone to the reconstruction of the history of ideas in the ^{twentieth} century; they are not driven by the desire to see something analogous to National Socialism return to the European scene, if only because they do not appreciate caricatures of the ideas they are fighting for. Born after 1945, their first concern is to *understand*: and understanding does not necessarily mean defending the indefensible.

The truth, beyond hypocritical indignation, as insincere as it is automatic, a veritable reflex con-

ditioned works that cost nothing but can "make a lot of money", is that Evola "bothers" a lot of people. On the left, his anti-Semitism is undeniable, yet moderate - at least in its expression (except on the rarest of occasions) - when compared to that of a certain non-Marxist socialism, from Toussenel to Proudhon, not to mention the Marx of *The Jewish Question*. His condemnation of, and even contempt for, most forms of nationalism, and his "realism of the idea", clash head-on with "integral nationalism" and the Maurrassian-inspired "politics first". Still on the right, and particularly in France, his "active impersonality" and his disdain for the "vanity fair" so dear to small cultural cenacles, hardly appeal to "literary" circles willing to denounce the mores of *Y's* left-wing *intelligentsia*, but who themselves never miss an opportunity to practice reciprocal and obligatory praise.

Evola is disturbing and frightening. He's not scary, in fact, because, according to pitiful rumors that have been vindicated, he was the Duce's "éminence grise", the "Italian Rosenberg", Himmler's "friend". He is frightening in his *coherence*: "I think Evola was coherent, excessively coherent one might say, repeating the same things for fifty years"²², as one left-wing academic acknowledges. But our world, which doesn't like greatness, can't like coherence, which is made up of courage, rigor, frankness, self-faithfulness, and a sense of responsibility.

²² Franco Ferraresi, *General discussion*, in *Politica Hermetica*, 1 1987, p. 123.

It's also "hard". Those who don't commit themselves will be forgiven a lot: that's why what is allowed to Cioran²³, for example, whose "bitter syllogisms" so seduce certain left-wing aesthetes, is denied to Evola. But between Giulio Cogni, the ultra-anti-Semitic fascist who called for the persecution of Italian Jews in the fortnightly *La Difesa della Razza*, before turning to the apology of universal miscegenation²⁴, and Evola, who always knew how to preserve his warrior's dignity, without later denying his commitment, let us be allowed, on the basis of a "double standard", to make a distinction between the two.

²³ In *La tentation d'exister* (Gallimard, Paris, 1956; and Idées/NRF, 1974: ed. used here), Cioran devoted an entire chapter to the Jewish people ("Un peuple de solitaires", pp. 69-103). In it, we read: "Excessive in everything, emancipated from the tyranny of the landscape, from the silliness of rootedness, unattached, acosmic, they are (...) foreigners in themselves, who cannot unequivocally speak for the natives" (p. 70-71). "The most intolerant and persecuted of peoples unites universalism with the strictest particularism" (p. 73). "There is nothing *natural* or vegetal about them, no "sap", no possibility of withering. In their perennity, something abstract but not bloodless, a hint of the demonic, unreal and active at the same time, a disquieting halo like a reverse nimbus that individualizes them forever" (p. 82). "In the days when they lived on usury, didn't they secretly delve into the Kabbalah? Money and mystery (...). Should we fight them? Only the fool dares confront the *invisible* weapons with which they are equipped" (p. 86). "Their irony (...) smacks of pent-up gall; it's a long-standing bitterness; envenomed, its features kill. It is not laughter, which is relaxation, but sneering, which is tension and the revenge of the humiliated. And let's face it, Jews are unbeatable at sneering" (p. 90). "Too ardent to be epicureans, they poison their pleasures (...), busybodies in every sense of the word, from the most vulgar to the most noble" (p. 99). These expressions are inserted into a text whose tone, from beginning to end, remains very measured. But all the same: from "acosmicity" to "affairment", most of the major themes of the anti-Semitic argument recur in Cioran's writing. Yet we have never seen him accused of anti-Semitism.

²⁴ On Cogni, cf. Julius Evola, *L'Arc et la Massue*, Paris-Puiseaux, 1984, chap. XVIII ("Sur la métaphysique du sexe et sur l'Un"), pp. 257-268.

to prefer the latter to the former.

Preziosi was also, in his own way, a coherent man: that's why we thought it useful to include in this collection, after Evola's articles, Renato Del Ponte's biobibliographical note on him, of obvious historical interest. Books on Fascism always mention Preziosi only superficially, and the only image we retain of him is that of a sickly anti-Semite, which this cultivated and intelligent man indeed was. But the character is undoubtedly more complex than ^{HE 25} appears.

Over and above the choices he made yesterday, and the deformations his temperament sometimes caused to ideas that obviously predated and surpassed fascism and national socialism, we shall see that Evola, although fully engaged in a conflict that was also a European civil war, was able to maintain the "honor of arms". Leaving aside the case of Guénon, whom it would be wrong to classify in the camp of the Total Counter-Revolution, it is probably not an exaggeration to say that Evola was "the last of the great".

²⁵ Referring explicitly to Preziosi, the great historian of Fascism Renzo De Felice makes this interesting remark: "I've always had (...) a certain taste, a certain psychological and human interest for a precise type of character with a dark (*fosca*) and Luciferian coherence, but, in his own way, disinterested. And I would say that between my Jacobins, my illuminati, and a certain type of fascism (...), there is in common an elusive *quid*, historiographically false, but psychologically true" (*Intervista sul fascismo*, Laterza, Rome-Bari, 1985, pp. 4-5; 1st ed.: 1975). On Preziosi, see also: Henri Rollin, *L'Apocalypse de notre temps. Les dessous de la propagande allemande d'après des documents inédits*, Gallimard, Paris, 1939, pp. 491-493, 498; Norman Cohn, *Histoire d'un mythe. The Jewish "Conspiracy" and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Gallimard, Paris, 1967, pp. 243-245.

reactionaries of modern times and the first prophet of tomorrow's new Right"²⁶.

François MAISTRE

Translators' note:

The notes of the Italian publisher, Renato Del Ponte, and our own notes have been distinguished by [Note de R.D.P.] and [N.D.T.]. The titles of foreign works (notably German) directly translated into Italian by Evola in the body of his articles have, of course, been translated into French here, with the title in the original language recalled in the notes. Works whose place of publication is not indicated were published in Paris.

²⁶ Renato Del Ponte, *Avviamento alla lettura di Julius Evola*, in *Bollettino interno del C.S.E.*, 6, May 1971, p. 2.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The sources of the texts included in this collection are listed below. Most of these texts come from the archives of the *Centro Studi Evoliani*, Genoa, which holds them either in their original state or as photocopies; the others have been found thanks to the painstaking research of Prof. Giovanni Conti, of Modena, who has long been very active in the field of Evolian bibliographical studies.

The monthly magazine *La Vita Italiana* (1913-1945), edited by Giovanni Pre- ziosi, from which eleven articles have been extracted, ranks first in terms of the number and importance of its articles:

Due facce del nazionalismo, XVIII, 216 (March 1931), pp. 232-243.

Universalità imperiale e particolarismo nazionalistico, XVIII, 217 (April 1931), pp. 330-339.

Osservazioni critiche sul "razzismo" nazional-socialista, XXI, 248 (November 1933), pp. 544-549.

Corporazioni e leggi d'onore, XXIV, 281 (August 1936), pp. 137-145.

Processo alla borghesia, XXVIII, 324 (March 1940), pp. 259-268.

Mito e realtà nella lotta antiborghese, XXVIII, 333 (December 1940), pp. 621-627 (article signed under the pseudonym Arthos).

Romanesimo, germanesimo e il caso Manacorda, XXIX, 339 (June 1941), pp. 649-657 (article signed under the pseudonym Arthos).

Vedute sull'ordine futuro delle nazioni, XXIX, 342 (September 1941), pp. 270-281.

"Neutralizzazione o dignificazione della burocrazia?", XXIX, 343 (October 1941), pp. 360-366 (article signed under the pseudonym Arthos).

Funzione dell'idea imperiale e distmzione della "cultura neutra", XXXI, 358 (January 1943), pp. 10-20.

A proposito della carta stampata inutile, XXXI, 361 (April 1943), pp. 376-381.

In second place, with eight articles, comes the monthly *Lo Stato* (1931-1943), edited by Carlo Costamagna, from which we have extracted the following texts:

Il nazismo sulla via di Mosca, VI, 3 (March 1935), pp. 186-195.

A proposito del convegno corporativo italo-francese, VI, 6 (June 1935), pp. 437-438.

Paradossi dei tempi: paganesimo razzista = illuminismo liberale, VI, 7 (July 1935), pp. 530-532 (unsigned article). L'Inghilterra e la degradazione dell'idea di impero, XI, 7 (July 1940), pp. 322-332.

Elementi dell'idea europea, XI,,9 (September 1940), p. 476-486.

Per un vero "diritto europeo", XII, 1 (January 1941), pp. 21-29.

Sulle differenze fra la concezione fascista e nazista dello Stato, XII, 4 (April 1941), pp. 143-153.

Per un allineamento politico-culturale dell'Italia e della Germania, XIII, 5 (May 1942), pp. 141-153.

In third place, we have the daily *II Regime Fascista* (1926-1945), edited by Roberto Farinacci, from which three articles have been extracted (the last being taken from the special page *Diorama filosofico quindicinale* edited by Evola himself), namely:

Sulle premesse spirituali dell'Impero, August 6, 1937, p.

3.

Eticità dell'autarchia, June 1, 1938, p. 3.

Limiti della "giustizia sociale", March 21, 1940, p. 3.

In fourth place comes the monthly *Vita Nova* (1925-1933), edited by Leandro Arpinati, with two articles taken from it:

Il "mito" del nuovo nazionalismo tedesco, VI, 11 (November 1930), pp. 930-934.

Il problema "europeo" al Convegno "Volta", VIII, 216 (March 1931), pp. 1071-1075.

Finally, the periodicals follow with one article each:

Rassegna Italiana (1918-1943), directed by Tommaso Sillani, with

"Neue Sachlichkeit. Una confessione delle nuove generazioni tedesche", XVI, 179 (April 1933), pp. 315-324.

Bibliografia fascista (1926-1943), edited by Alessandro Pavalini, with

La lotta nazionalsocialista per la "visione del mondo", IX, 5 (May 1934), pp. 360-366.

Europa Nazione (1951) with

Sui presupposti spirituali e strutturali dell'unità europea,

I, 1 (January 1951), pp. 48-54.

Pagine libéré (new series: 1956-?) with *Quo vadis*

Germania?, III, 8-10 (August-October 1958), pp. 21-23.

Renato DEL PONTE

PART ONE

**IMPERIAL IDEA
AND THE NEW
ORDER**

1931

THE TWO FACES OF NATIONALISM

It is a fact that the Great War, far from having exhausted the process of the emergence of nationalisms, both European and extra-European, on the contrary brought it to a climax. A reflection aimed at clarifying the significance of such a state of affairs is therefore fully justified at the present time.

What meaning can nationalism have in the context of a philosophy of culture? To the problem posed in these terms, we believe we can offer the following solution: *the nationalist option admits of two ideally distinct and antithetical possibilities, although in practice they are often confused. While one is a sign of degeneration and regression, the other leads to higher values - it is the prelude to resurrection.*

Let's take a look at how to make such an idea understandable, an idea which, even in its wording, is rich in consequences.

A phenomenon such as nationalism cannot be understood without placing it in the context of a global vision of history that rests on a solid foundation of value criteria. For a vision of this kind, however, the obvious fact is the gradual fall of political power from one plane to another,

in ancient civilizations, attested to the qualitative differentiation of human possibilities - a process that goes back to the beginning of so-called "historical" times and has developed right up to the present day, as Western political history in particular attests¹.

The analogy between the political organism and the human organism has a long tradition. In every higher-order form of bodily organization, there is in any case a hierarchical connection of four distinct functions: at the lower level, these are the undifferentiated energies of pure vitality; above them, however, dominate the functions proper to exchanges and the general organic economy - which, in turn, find in the *will* that which moves and directs the entire body in space. And at the top, finally, sits a power of intellectuality and freedom, as the center and inner fire of the whole organism.

Traditions existed for which the "great body" constituted by States - considered by them almost as spiritualized bodies, and not as creations of necessity and temporal contingency - demanded a division and hierarchization of classes and castes rigorously on the same model. To vitality, organic economy, will and spirit corresponded the four distinct classes of serfs (or workers), merchants, warriors and, finally, representatives of an authority both royal and priestly. Each of these castes was arranged hierarchically: the masses, under the control and government of those who mastered them, and the masses, under the control and government of those who mastered them, and the masses, under the control and government of those who mastered them.

¹ The idea of caste regression was first set out in our work *Imperialismo pagano* (Roma-Todi, 1928) [anastatic reprint: Edizioni di Ar, Padua, 1978 - Editor's note]; we found it again, clarified, in the conceptions of deputy V. Vezzani, though these have not yet been the subject of a written statement. Finally, it was systematically clarified by René Guénon in *Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel* (Paris, 1929).

These were under the authority of warrior aristocracies - in turn, gathered around those who, through a conquering and accomplished type, attested to the presence of that which, in man, goes beyond man.

The ancient Orient (India) and the Far East were familiar with a similar type of social organization, and ancient Greece and Rome were partly inspired by it; it can be found in the political doctrine of Plato and Aristotle, and the Catholic-feudal Middle Ages were the ultimate revival of it in terms of social organization.

It is important to note that such an organization corresponded to a type of *qualitative* hierarchy and attested to the emergence of higher forms of interest and individuality. In the ancient East, members of the two upper castes were referred to as "regenerate", and were therefore expressions of a spiritual elite - the Warrior and the Aristocrat also having, according to this conception, a more "sacred" than "political" significance. Any hierarchy based on economy, work, industry and collective administration remained confined to the two lower castes, equivalent to what, in the human organism, is limited to the physical-vital domain.

This is why the hierarchy of the four castes represented, in an equally visible way, the progressive degrees of an elevation of the individual through, precisely, adherence to forms of activity superior to those of immediate existence. Faced with the anonymity of the mass devoted solely to "living", the managers of work and wealth - the second caste - already represented the outline of a type, a "person". But in the heroism of the Warrior and *Vethos* of the Aristocrat - the third caste - we sense, even more clearly, the mode of a "more than living", of a being who, of himself, gives himself a law eclipsing the natural, instinctive, collective and utilitarian element. If, finally, the Ascetic, the King and the *Pontifex* were to merge, according to the primordial conception of the

leaders, in one and the same being, is an indication of a universal, almost supernatural fulfillment of personality, the completed expression of that which, in common man, on the other hand, lacks the strength to free himself from the contingent to be exclusively himself. Insofar as such dominators, as completed individuals, served as the fulcrum of the entire social organism, that organism was comparable to a body underpinned by the spirit; temporal power and spiritual authority coincided, and hierarchy proved *legitimate*, in the absolute sense of that term.

Once this outline has been drawn up - the ideal, value-creating model of which is independent of the extent and form in which any society may have realized it in the past - the process of the gradual "fall" of political power, in strictly historical times, appears in a raw light.

The era of "sacred kings" - of simultaneously imperial and priestly natures - is already on the threshold of "mythical" times. The pinnacle disappears, and power passes to the level immediately below - to the Warrior caste; all that remains are monarchs of the secular type: warlords or lords of temporal justice.

Second collapse: the great European monarchies disappear, the aristocracies die out - in the course of revolutions (in England and France) and constitutions, they become mere superfluous survivals, in the face of the "will of the nation". The formation, within parliamentary, republican and bourgeois democracies, of economic oligarchies, expresses the fatal transfer of political power from the second to the modern equivalent of the third caste - the merchant caste.

The crisis of bourgeois society, finally, the proletarian revolt, the despotism of the masses constituting themselves into purely collective, economic and international entities, heralds the final collapse through which power will pass into the hands of the last caste - that of nameless and faceless beings, leading to the reduction of

any material and quantitative *standard of living*.

Or: exactly like the person who can no longer bear the tension of the mind, nor that of the will, of the force that moves the body, and lets himself sink - only to rise again magnetically, like a soulless body under the impulse of *another* force, this time emerging from the folds of pure vitality.

The time has come to recognize the illusion of all the myths associated with "progress", to open our eyes wide to reality. The time has come to recognize the terrible destiny of spiritual devastation that has weighed down the West, and which is now bearing its ultimate fruit.

Returning to the specific problem we've posed, it's worth highlighting the fact that at the heart of the involution process described above is the transfer of the individual to the collective, which follows closely on from the decay, to which we've alluded, of the poles of interest from which the higher castes derived the legitimacy of their hierarchical authority, to the level of those proper, on the other hand, to the lower castes.

In reality, it's only by adhering to free activity that man can truly blossom. And so, through the two symbols of pure Action (heroism) and pure Knowledge (contemplation, asceticism) based on an aristocratic regime, the two higher castes opened up ways for man to participate in this "supramundane" order - the only one where he can belong and experience the integral, universal meaning of personality. By destroying all interest in this order, by concentrating on practical and utilitarian goals, on economic achievements or on any of the preoccupations of the two lower castes, man disintegrates, becomes off-center, opens himself up once again to forces that tear him away from himself and resti-

The effort to rise above them characterizes all truly superior cultures.

This is how, in the most recent social forms, the collective acquires ever greater importance, to the point of virtually reviving the *totemism* of primitive communities. Today, the nation, the race, society and humanity assume a mystical personality and demand unconditional adherence and subordination from the individuals who form part of them, while at the same time, in the name of "freedom", hatred is aroused for superior and dominating individualities, the only ones with regard to whom the principle of subordination and obedience of particular individuals had a sacred character and was justified. And this tyranny of the collective is not confined to asserting itself over what, in individual life, belongs to the political and social domain: it arrogates to itself a moral and "spiritual" right and - by claiming that culture and spirit cease to be forms of disinterested activity and become organs dependent on the collective temporal entity - it properly exalts the morality that affirms that the spirit has meaning and value only as an instrument in the service of the body. That man, before conceiving of himself as a personality, as an "I", must conceive of himself as a social group, as a faction or as a nation - this is one of the commandments of the latest subversive ideologies, through which the relationship according to which primitive people saw themselves in relation to the *totem* of their own tribe or *clan* reappears in a very precise way.

The revival of the Russian race, the way in which Bolshevism has invested it with a universal prophetic mission, confirms the regression to primitive social stages that is present in so many modern forms of life. The opinion of those who see in the new Russia the final revolt of a barbaric Asiatic race, which rejects the attempt at European civilization undertaken by the Tsars over the last two centuries, and tends to make common cause with the "new Russians", is therefore very accurate.

forms of social decomposition in the European world. Bolshevism is the incarnation, in a modern form, of the old spirit of the Slavic race: a race without tradition which, in its social mysticism, in its amalgam of sensuality and spirituality, in its predominance of *pathos* over *Vethos* and of instinct over rationality, takes us back to the forms of sub-personal indifferentiation and communizing promiscuity peculiar, precisely, to the primitives.

The explosion of the world war gave this element free rein, and turned it into a terrible ferment of decomposition, undermining what had remained healthy in Europe. In announcing the advent of the "proletarian era", "Soviet civilization" is dedicated to the elimination of the "leprosy" of personality and freedom, "poisons of bourgeois society" and principles of all evil; to the abolition not only of private property, but also of all independent thought and "supernatural motivation, and therefore alien to class interests" (Lenin); to the advent of the "all-powerful mass-man", who alone must live and give shape to all individual ways of life and thought. The modern aspect of Bolshevism lies solely in its "method": mechanization and rationalization are the means selected to realize, within a purely economic universal social regime, the mass-man who already mystically lived in the Slavic soul. This is how "Soviet civilization" meets - and is aware of - another nation that similarly arrogates to itself a universal regenerative mission and the presumption of representing the ultimate end of civilization: America.

In the U.S., the process not only shows the wanderings of a people left at the precivilized stage: it follows the inflexible determinism which dictates that the moment man closes himself off from all forms of pure spirituality in order to abandon himself to the pursuit of temporal things, he *ipso facto* ceases to belong to himself and becomes part of an irrational collective entity, which he can no longer dominate.

ner. America, through the sanctification of the temporal and the secularization of the sacred, initiated by the Protestant heresy, has reached precisely this point. Carrying to a climax the ideals of material conquest of the world that Europe had set out to achieve, it ended up - without even realizing it - giving a practical, physical character to every understanding of power, justice, activity and personality, to the point of constituting an even more terrible form of barbarism. There, the Ascetic is seen as a lazy, anachronistic parasite "useless to society"; the Warrior, as a dangerous exalted person who should be eliminated by timely humanitarian pacifist prophylaxis - to be replaced, no doubt, by the model of the *boxer**. The perfect type, the spiritual champion, on the other hand, is "the man who works, who produces", and any form of activity, even spiritual, is appreciated only as "work", "productive work", "social service" - which could not be more characteristic of the fact that, at the pinnacle of such a society, we find exactly the type representative of the last of the ancient castes: that of slaves devoted to toil.

Here too, having renounced his spiritual personality, man ceases to have any value whatsoever, outside the conditions imposed by collective organization, caught up in the fever to produce, to "achieve", to agitate. Conditions which, moreover, usurp moral and even religious value, and tend to standardize souls too, according to a collective egalitarian *forma mentis*, to the point of suffocating even the ability to realize the degree of degeneration all this represents.

These are the forms in which the cycle closes and the collapse is completed. Russia and America are the two symptoms, the two faces of the same phenomenon².

* French in the text [N.D.T.J.

² As early as the late 1920s, Evola had lucidly defined the two terms of global subversion: cf. his essay *Americanismo e Bolscevismo*, in *Nuova Antologia*, CCLXV, 1371, May-June 1929, pp. 110-128.

From the human organism it was when the brilliance and authority of the higher castes governed it, the social body retrogrades to the stage of a subhuman acephalous organism. It's the advent of the "faceless beast".

We now have all the elements we need to tackle the problem seriously: *what is the meaning of nationalism in the modern world?*

On the basis of what we've said so far, a certain type of nationalism offers us a precise physiognomy: it's the degree that lies immediately before the international forms of economic-proletarian collectivism.

In this nationalism, the important thing is not that a distinct national consciousness emerges as opposed to others, but that the "nation" becomes a person, an entity in its own right; and the inability to go beyond this right of land and blood - which concerns only the natural, infra-intellectual aspect of man - and the impossibility of the individual acquiring value except in the terms specific to a given community and tradition, end up being elevated to the rank of ethical values. Being "national", in this context, confers on everything a veritable mystical halo, guaranteeing its inviolability and commanding its respect. This infra-intellectual ethnic element not only fails to recognize the authority of higher principles, but also debases them in its own service. The "nation" demands the first tribute: it is only later, and in a subordinate manner, that a place is given to reality, truth and spirit. But some forms of nationalism go even further: any disinterested, objective criterion is accused of abstraction.

[tr. fr. *Américanisme et bolchevisme*, in J. Mabire, J. Varenne, P. Pascal *et al*, *Julius Evola, le visionnaire foudroyé*, Copernic, Paris, 1977, p. 71-101 - N.D.T.]. - Note by R.D.P.].

national tradition and political interest: that's when we talk about *our* scientific, philosophical and even religious tradition³.

And anything that isn't "ours" and doesn't "add value to the nation" is immediately met with unfavorable prejudice or, at the very least, suspicious disinterest.

And just as higher-order activities are not allowed to manifest themselves freely and lead to a higher reality than that conditioned by race, so a nationalism conceived in this way respects an elite personality only insofar as it is a "representative" of the nation. Born of the revolutions that overthrew what remained of the aristocratic-feudal regime, this nationalism expresses nothing more than a pure and simple "gregarious spirit": it is a variety of democratic intolerance for any leader who is not a simple organ of the "popular will", dependent in everything and for everything on the latter's sanction. In the former, the individual is redissolved in the original ethnic-national entities; in the latter, the differentiation inherent in the latter is itself overcome, giving rise to even greater collectivization and disintegration within the "mass" element. In order to move from one level to the other, all that's needed is for the mystique of race to give way to a purely economic-mechanical structure: the impersonal nature of such a structure removes all vestiges of qualitative differentiation, rationalization and mechanization.

³ When, as here, we speak of tradition in the negative sense, we mean to refer to the conception of tradition which involves no truly intellectual, i.e. supra-ethnic, element, and which represents, as Chesterton put it, an extension in time of what is, in relation to space, the right granted to majorities: the right of the dead over the living, based on the fact that they are the dead of the same race.

sation of social life, leaving the way virtually clear for the advent of the homeland-less mass-man. But if we consider that the domain of contemporary society is precisely that of economic-mechanical power, against which every criterion of value and magnitude is practically measured, it may only be a matter of time before such transitions take place⁴.

But we can also ask whether nationalism is capable of taking on another meaning. We believe we can answer this question in the affirmative. As we have seen, nationalism appears to be a transitional form that belongs to the political domain that has fallen into the hands of the third caste, pending its transfer to those of the last caste. And yet, because of this very nature, it is susceptible to a double meaning: if we can encounter this transitional form in the direction of a fall, we can also encounter it in the direction of a rise, of an eventual reintegration. Let's suppose we've hit bottom: should we still find the strength to rise to the surface, we'll once again encounter nationalism - but a very different kind of nationalism! As in the case of so-called "vector" quantities in physics, such a phenomenon can only be defined on the basis of a direction factor.

For the first nationalism, the meaning of this direction is that of collectivization, achieved at the level of the "nation". For the second, on the other hand, the direction is from collectivization to the reconstruction of a new *aristocratic* hierarchy.

Nothing could better express the premises of this

⁴These Evolian assertions, which have a prophetic flavour given the time (1931) in which they were formulated, have been confirmed today. Evola also saw a dangerous tendency towards *völkisch* nationalist regression in certain currents of National Socialism. Cf. *below* his article *Considérations sur l'ordre futur des nations*, 1941 [Note by R.D.P.].

second nationalism than the words of Paul de Lagarde, a well-known theorist of German nationalism⁵. Being "human" is a minus compared to being "national", and being national is a minus compared to being a "person". In other words, in relation to the quality "humanity", the "national" element of differentiation brings an added value of "x", and the element specific to the individual's personality, an additional added value of "y" to this "x". The idea is that of a hierarchy, going from the abstract to the concrete - the abstract being the collective, the general, while the concrete is, on the contrary, the differentiated, the individual. Compared to the amorphous mass of "humanity", the resurgence of differentiated national consciousness can therefore be a first step forward. But the national consciousness, the common ethnic trunk, must in turn appear as a formless matter in relation to individualities that are fulfilled, become themselves, develop according to forms of existence superior to those solely conditioned by blood or the demands of the collectivity, bringing this matter from the state of *chaos* to the state of *cosmos*, from power to act. At this point, relations are reversed: the nation is no longer the end of the individual, but rather the individual, as an aristocratic and spiritual personality, is the end of the nation - insofar as the latter remains its mother, in almost the same material conditions as the earth in relation to the tree, which detaches itself from it in its upper part to rise towards the free sky.

With the dividing line thus clearly drawn, we need only return to the qualitative significance of the ancient caste hierarchy, to fix it once and for all. A nationalism that is the prelude to a resurrection is inconceivable.

P. de Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften*, B.L., S. 164.

We can't go beyond the mechanico-collectivist stage, but would indeed go beyond it), as long as we haven't laid down the fundamental requirement of restoring an order of values irreducible to all that is practical, "social" and economic, and attributing to these values a direct pre-eminence and authority over everything else. Without such a requirement, there can be no hierarchy - and without hierarchy, a return to a higher, spiritualized type of state is impossible. In reality, hierarchy does not simply mean classification: it signifies the subordination of that which is of an inferior nature to that which is of a superior nature - "inferior" being everything that can be measured in practical, utilitarian, worldly terms; "superior", everything that expresses a pure, disinterested form of activity. Any other criterion would be both illusory and corrupting. "Illusory" is the right word for any hierarchy considered within the framework of pure economics, based therefore on differences in income, political or professional rank, class in the Marxist sense, and so on. Only with the emergence of forms of interest superior to the economic plane taken as a whole can the principle of a genuine hierarchy be born: we must start from the idea that we do not live to develop the economy, but that the economy is only a means to an end, the end remaining inner elevation, the blossoming of personhood in the integral and "supramundane" sense. A hierarchy is indeed "corrupting" when it expresses the enslavement of what is not "practical" to what is; when the mind becomes the instrument of the body; and, above all, when "pragmatism" rages in all fields, including the scientific, in tandem with the shoddy Machiavellianism and generalized arrivism of which today offers so many examples. Nothing is as anti-hierarchical - indeed, as anarchical - as these counterfeits of hierarchy.

From the point of view of restorative nationalism, then, the objective is as follows: firstly, to give form to, and order everything in society that corresponds to

to the physical-vital or animal part of a human organism and belonged to the domain of the two subaltern classes: work, economy, political organization in the narrow sense of the term, leading to an "economic peace" which, through its effects, will enable higher-order energies to be freed and act on a higher plane. We can then begin to tackle the "reconstruction" of the second caste, the warrior aristocracy to which the first aristocrat belongs: the Monarch. It is through the aristocracy that the ideal of superior personality formation can be realized. But we mustn't think here of those representatives of certain corrupt and degenerate families against whom easy demagogic criticism is exercised: we must have in mind the original type of Lord, that being in whom self-control, perspicacity, disinterestedness, culture, honor, loyalty and, above all, leadership have become a second nature whose solidity rests on the reliable foundation of a *bloodline*. Aristocracy is the necessary extension of positive nationalism, for while the latter delimits the boundaries of a given bloodline and ethnic trunk, aristocracy operates within this framework of finer selection and differentiation, accelerating the process that leads from the general and collective to the individual, the direction of all genuine progress.

Once an aristocratic tradition has been rebuilt, the first breath of spirit will have been communicated to the "body" of the state - and nationalism, having achieved its specific objective, can give way to higher forms of state, comparable to those that the second caste governed in the past. What will characterize them is the absolute personalization of all relationships, marking the transition from the mechanical to the organic, from constraint to freedom. In days gone by, for example, there were no "soldiers" but *warriors*; you didn't fight for the "nation" or for "law", but for your king; you didn't "obey" "social law": you were "faithful" to your lord. Those who submitted *knew*

to whom he submitted, and he did so with pride. Responsibility was borne directly by the chiefs, by the Monarchs: they didn't offload it onto faceless entities and ideological *taboos*.

Authority rested on the greatness of one's personality and on the ability to dedicate oneself to something that cannot be bought, sold or measured in terms of "utility": something that no longer belongs to simple life, but to a "more than life".

In turn, this will provide the basis for an even higher type of state, but one too remote to even hint at. Just as men can remain free and distinct as a body, yet united by the same idea, so when the elites of the different human races have risen to the level of true spiritual superiority, the way will be virtually open for a new *universal* culture. Here, universalism does not mean "internationalism" or, worse still, "levelling humanitarianism" - both of which are products of a materialistic mentality. In reality, the purely political differentiation of states is of the same order as that of bodies: it's not a question of physical unity, but of cultural unity, of adherence to supra-individual realities. The Catholic Middle Ages, as well as the Roman Empire and India, are examples of universality conceived in this way: they show us the possibility of a profound cultural and spiritual unity within the plurality, and often even the struggle, of ethnically distinct states or races. If we were to speak of a future *European* consciousness, it would be in these terms alone.

But this already surpasses our goal of clarifying the two possible meanings of nationalism. We believe that these meanings are now unambiguous for everyone. As for the extent to which today's struggling nationalisms in various states obey one or the other meaning, this is an empirical problem, totally unrelated to the present considerations.

II

1931

IMPERIALIST UNIVERSALITY AND NATIONALIST PARTICULARISM

Judging by the reactions they have elicited from more than one reader, some of the assertions contained in our previous article, *The Two Faces of Nationalism*, seem worthy of some elaboration, but without leaving the realm that interests us alone - that of principles. We'll tell it like it is, and no one would make a worse mistake than to believe that some of our considerations might be dictated by special current circumstances specific to this or that country.

We need to move on from an analysis of the meaning of the phenomenon of "nationalism" to one of the meaning of the concept of "imperialism", and to determine the relationship between the two. In view of the foregoing analysis, the problem posed presents a major difficulty. In fact, since "nation" was a new word to designate a phenomenon that was itself relatively new, it was not difficult to make oneself understood: it was simply a question of interpreting such a phenomenon in the light of a more complete historical vision that was more in line with reality. On the other hand, the notion of "empire" ren-

It's understandable, therefore, that most of those who refer to this concept today are more or less confused or misunderstood.

We have demonstrated that there are two kinds of nationalism: the first is a phenomenon of degeneration, insofar as it expresses a regression of the individual into the collective (the "nation"), of intellectuality into vitalism (the *pathos* and "soul" of the race). The second is a positive phenomenon, expressing on the contrary a reaction against even more radical forms of collectivization, such as, for example, the proletarian Internationals or the standardization of the practical spirit on an economic-social basis (America).

The first (demagogic nationalism) aims to destroy individuals' own specific qualities, in favor of "national" ones. In the second (aristocratic nationalism), the aim is to wrest individuals from the subaltern state to which they have fallen, and where each finds himself the equal of the other: it's a question of differentiating them until the fact of feeling that they belong to a given race or nation expresses a higher value and dignity than the fact of feeling equal (egalitarian fraternity, communist-style "humanity").

By developing the process by which nationalism takes on the meaning of a positive phenomenon, we are thus brought back to the values of difference and hierarchy: by becoming themselves again, individuals pass from the plane of materiality, where there can be no real difference, to that of intellectuality, in which they participate in something that is non-individual - not in the sense of infra-individual (collectivism) but, on the contrary, *supra-individual*: they participate in a *universality*. This is when we move from nationalism to *Vimperialism*, to the anonymity of great, more-than-human realities. All true imperialism

is universal, and represents a *positive* move beyond the nationalist stage.

Let's be clear about this fundamental point of opposition between collectivism and universalism, which might appear to a reader unfamiliar with these issues as a logician's subtlety. Collectivism is the mixing of diverse elements to the point of making a potpourri in which they lose all character and autonomy, under the guise of either an amorphous mass or the uniformity of a "type". Universalism is the process of ascending from the multiplicity of different elements to a principle that is both superior to and prior to their differentiation, which derives solely from their sensible reality. Here, difference is abolished; here, difference is *integrated*. Universality is a purely spiritual reality: we reach it by ascending, through a kind of "asceticism", from sensibility and passion - the domain of the particular - to pure intellectuality and, more generally, to disinterested forms of activity. But it no more denies individual realities than a physical law denies the specific character of very different phenomena, which may find in it their common principle.

We have stated these ideas in abstract form, so that they retain their most general meaning. But we can now turn to the important practical consequences of the distinction between collectivism and universalism. There are certain narrow forms of nationalism which, for example, tendentiously confuse the former with the latter. They extend a legitimate reaction against attempts at internationalization and the erasing of ethnic differences (a legitimate reaction, since we are opposed to tendencies in the direction of collectivist levelling), to things that have, on the contrary, a universal significance, appealing to the freedom of individuals vis-à-vis the collectivist and infra-intellectual aspect of nationalism itself. In this respect, J. Benda, in his book *La trahison des clercs* (*The Betrayal of Clerics*), has made a

a number of very accurate observations. And we ourselves, in our previous article, pilloried the strange pretensions of certain extremist nationalists, who come to want a "national" science, a "national" philosophy, a "national" art and even a "national" religion.

But to want this means having no idea of the *universal* potential of these spiritual phenomena: it means limiting them, transposing them from the plane that is theirs to a lower plane, i.e. ethnic, rather than spiritual or intellectual. To put it bluntly, a "national science", insofar as it is "national", is not a "science", and as a science, it is not simply "national". And if, on the other hand, we were to allude only to the fact that a given science has been cultivated, in a particular way, by people belonging to a given nation, and not to the objective results of their work (which have a "scientific" value independent of individuals), it's quite clear that we would then stop at the mere anecdotal and biographical aspect - an entirely empirical aspect, which no-one has the right to impose on higher-order considerations. The fact that a scientist is not from "our" land certainly doesn't make the results he has reached any more false or less acceptable, if they are correct; conversely, the fact that he is from "our" land doesn't make them any more true or more acceptable if they are false! While it is difficult to refute the evidence of such statements when they apply to science, many people believe they can do so when it comes to other fields such as philosophy, art or the supra-sensible. In so doing, they demonstrate only one thing: that for everything that is no longer in the realm of matter (science), their attitude is that of *Virrealism*, and that they are still incapable of rising to the point of view proper to objectivity, to supra-individuality.

Having said that, it's clear that imperialism deserves its name when it dominates by virtue of universal values to which it is committed.

a given nation or race has risen through its ability to surpass itself. This is exactly the opposite of the "morality" inherent in the so-called "sacred egoism" of nations. Without a "Die and become", no nation can aspire to an effective and legitimate imperial mission. One cannot remain locked into one's national characteristics and then seek, on such a basis, to dominate the world or simply another land. If the imperial attempts of modern times have aborted or led to the ruin of the nations that undertook them (latest example: the Central Empires), the cause lies in this contradiction of wanting to be, at the same time, "nation" and "empire" - as well as the absence, at root, of true universality.

What's more, these attempts imply a materialistic and barbaric degradation of the very concept of empire. It can't be otherwise: true domination can only be achieved by raising oneself to something superior to that which one wishes to dominate; it can't be achieved by remaining at the same level. As a hand, a hand cannot claim to be able to dominate the other organs of the body; it can, however, do so by ceasing to be a hand, by becoming a *soul*, i.e. by appealing to the unitary and immaterial function whose vocation is to unify and direct the diversity of particular physical functions. The hypothetical attempt of a hand to become master of the body, by usurping the function assigned to the soul, may help us to understand the state of mind of certain "imperial" ideologies of the nationalist, materialist or militarist type. The means, here, is not superiority, but the simple violence of a more powerful force that is nonetheless of the same nature as the one it intends to subject to its law.

Strangely enough, if, on the one hand, in a civilized nation, it is reprehensible for any individual to violently seize the property of another, simply because he or she needs it - on the other hand, such behavior is not considered a crime.

nations seems the most natural and legitimate in the world, and serves as the basis for that barbaric conception of imperialism mentioned above. A poor nation, it is argued, has every right to lay its hands on the property of a richer nation, in order to create "space" for its expansion. The military or diplomatic solution to achieve this would have the "sacred" character that such "imperialists" pride themselves on. And that's not all: in some cases, a situation is created in which the nation is deliberately driven to the need for expansion, i.e., to imperialism. Such is the case, for example, with the "demographic" method: once overpopulation has been achieved, and the nation has reached the condition of "having no space", the need arises for an outlet, for a surge which, in our view, insofar as this is concerned, has characteristics that are difficult to distinguish from those of "barbarian invasions".

The materialism of this "imperialist" conception is also blatantly obvious in its failure to recognize the power of numbers and quantity over quality. If a nation lacks the solid foundation of a qualitatively superior culture, all the expansions necessitated by its excess numbers - whether through emigration or military expansion - will lead to the same result: the provision of raw material on which a foreign type of culture will predominate. The material winners will be the ideal losers. The case of Rome versus Greece is not quite comparable, but it does give us a glimpse of the validity of such a thesis. Nowadays, we could mention America, a singular melting pot where waves of emigrants of the most diverse ethnic origins have, two generations later, been virtually reduced, on the whole, to a single type - whereas India, for example, has managed to maintain its ideal unity intact, despite the domina-

centuries of more powerful but qualitatively inferior races.

Alongside this false imperialism, there's another, just as false, of an economic nature. Today, it goes without saying that virtually all activity is conditioned and measured in economic terms (we have seen in this the sign of the advent of the penultimate caste, that of the merchants), and that fertile ground is offered to those who cherish the illusion that dominating and monopolizing the economic resources of a group of races has imperial significance. But for anyone who does not share in the moral debasement so characteristic of the modern *standard of living*, such an illusion undoubtedly has all the hallmarks of extravagance, not to say ridiculousness.

The lords of old left administrative matters (the economy) to their freedmen and stewards. Their main concern was to cultivate superior, "aristocratic" forms of interest, existence, action and dignity - forms which constituted precisely the essence of the right and function inherent in their caste. If someone was suited to administration and had a taste for it, he could exercise it without exception: the fact that it was this one rather than that one who was in charge of the economy could only be of mediocre interest to them, the essential thing being that the just subordination and commitment of loyalty of the non-caste administrator to the aristocrat or the Prince should endure. But things are very different today. The plutocrats have taken the place of the aristocrats; the administrator, like the trafficker with his gold, takes himself for "chiefs" and no longer recognizes anyone to whom he is answerable - until, one fine day, the contingency inherent in any material force, abandoned to itself and deprived of principles, overthrows them and puts others (if not the outright anonymity of the masses) in their place.

It is in this context that we must assess the risk that

represents "imperialism" - just like the Semitic or Masonic financial international. This danger exists and is very real for anyone who accepts the reduction of all criteria and concepts of power to the level of pure economics. But anyone - individual or race - who, conversely, rises a little above such a plan, and anchors himself firmly where things can no longer be "bought" or "sold", cannot fail to wonder on what such "imperialists" imagine they can base their domination.

Consideration of these negative aspects leads us to that of *Vempire's* true conditions. A race is ripe for empire when it proves capable of going beyond itself, when it takes the same step as the hero - who wouldn't be what he is if, in his impetus, he didn't triumph over the instinct that would have him riveted to the little animal love for his own life. This is why nationalism (in the static, exclusivist sense) and imperialism are two mutually exclusive terms. An imperial race distances itself as much from its own particularities as from those of other races; it does not oppose one particularism to another (one nation to another, the right of this one to the right of that one, etc.): it opposes the universal to the particular.

Anything that is subjectivist, sentimentalist, "idealistic" or even utilitarian belongs in the realm of the particular. What is universal is that which is free of such elements and can be expressed in terms of pure objectivity. Whether we're talking about the development of an individual, a culture or a race, the ability to understand the point of view of reality and to want it against all odds is a decisive step - before which it could be said that the mind has not yet attained true manhood. If feelings, pride, values, greed, hatred - in short, everything that is "human" in the narrow sense, on both an individual and collective level - guide a race, it will necessarily be at the mercy of the contingency inherent in things that have not yet become "human".

in themselves. But if this race, at least within an elite of leaders, succeeds in ridding itself of the two fundamental elements of existence: knowledge and action - then it will prove qualified for a mission, which can already be said to be superior to the empirical and political world. *Universality as knowledge and universality as action: these are the two pillars of every imperial age.*

Knowledge is universal when it succeeds in giving us the meaning of things before whose grandeur and eternity all *human pathos* and caprice vanish; when it introduces us to the primordial, the cosmic: to that which, in the realm of the spirit, presents the same traits of purity and power as oceans, deserts and glaciers. Every true universal tradition has always carried with it this breath of the open sea, arousing disinterested forms of activity, awakening a sensitivity to values that can no longer be measured by any utilitarian or passionate criteria, on both an individual and collective level; opening up, alongside "life", to a "more than life". This is the type of invisible empire, examples of which can be found in Brahmanical India, the Catholic Middle Ages and Hellenism itself: a unitary culture that prevails from within, within a diversity of peoples or possibly independent cities, over any "politically" and economically conditioned reality.

This is how we can conceive of an empire, visible as well as invisible, with a material as well as a spiritual unity. Such an empire is built when, alongside universality as knowledge, we also have "universality as action". By way of historical references, we could mention ancient China, Rome and, again, in part, the Middle Ages, through both the Crusades and Islam.

Universalized" *action* is pure action.

heroism. Thus, in the two requirements of the imperial concept, we find exactly the qualities that defined the two ancient upper castes: the sapiential caste (which does not necessarily mean "priestly") and the warrior caste. Without further ado, it should be pointed out that the concept of "heroism" used here is not that of the moderns. Traditionally, heroism is asceticism in the most rigorous sense of the term: the hero is a nature as purified of all "human" elements as the ascetic; he shares the same character of purity as the great forces of things, and has no use for passion, sentimentalism and the various motivations, ideal or material, collective or individual, that drive men. The specific functions of each of the ancient castes expressed the very nature, the very mode of being of the person who belonged to it: thus, for the warrior, war was his ultimate end, the path to his own spiritual realization. War was a good in itself, and heroism a "pure", and therefore universal, form of activity. The rhetoric of "fighting for rights", "territorial claims", sentimental or humanitarian pretexts and other nonsense are typically modern, and absolutely foreign to the traditional conception of heroism. In the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, in the *Koran*, in the Latin conception of the *mors triumphalis*, in the Hellenic assimilation of the hero to the initiate, in the symbol of the Nordic *Walhalla* open only to heroes, in certain aspects of the "holy war" expressed by Catholic feudalism itself - we find, variously formulated, the idea both supranational and supra-human of a transcendent heroism. Here, heroism is a technique of virile asceticism, of the destruction of lower nature, a path to immortality, a relationship with that which is eternal. Transfigured thanks to such a general atmosphere, action acquires a universal nature: *it becomes a force from above, capable of embodying the universality of a spiritual tradition in an earthly body too: it is*

*the very condition of empire in the highest sense of the word*¹.

Are such exhumations as vain as they are anachronistic? That can't be ruled out either. But under these conditions, the conclusion to be drawn is that the times are such that they also transform into rhetoric the evocation, before which many hesitate, of ideals and symbols that have, today, lost their original meaning.

This does not mean, however, that doctrinally speaking, we can and must always draw a line between concepts, and take care not to sink into contradictions. When the points of reference are "national pride", "irredentist claims", "the necessities of expansion", etc. - let's repeat - you're in the wrong business. - When the points of reference are "national pride", "irredentist claims", "the necessities of expansion", etc. - let's repeat - we're within the framework of the legitimate principles of a great modern nation, but in no way within that of an empire. Can we imagine a Roman ever having fought for something similar, and ever having needed to warm his head with passionate rhetoric, to accomplish the miracle of this worldwide conquest, through which the universality of luminous Greco-Latin civilization spread to the farthest shores?

It is necessary to go back to this state of pure forces, forces that move with the same fatality and purity, with the same inhumanity as the great forces of things. The great conquerors have always con-

¹ We have gone into great depth on the traditional conception of heroism in articles such as *Simboli eroici della antica tradizione romana* (*Vita Nova*, 1929, no. 8) and *La Grande e la Piccola Guerra Santa* (*La Torre*, 1930, no. 10). With regard to the latter text, in order to show clearly how far the bad faith and imposture of certain irresponsible polemicists can go, we recall that our defense of the traditional idea (according to which a warrior caste goes to war because it finds in it the joy of fulfilling its duty, not for a piece of land) was presented as an explicit assertion, on our part, that... Dalmatia rightfully belongs to Yugoslavia (!!!).

They were, in a way, "sons of destiny", the bearers of a force that had *to* be fulfilled, and to which everything, starting with themselves, their happiness and their tranquillity, had to be bent and sacrificed. In its fullest sense, empire is something superior and transcendent: *sacrum imperium*. How, then, can we associate the myth of empire - as we wrote a few years ago² - with this or that "idealism" or traditionalism (in the narrow sense of the term), with this or that sentimentalism or "utilitarianism"? How can we link it to the demands of a faction or a nation - not to say a region, a town or a village? It's all too common for modernists to come up with such absurdities.

Anyone who brings up imperial symbols again, regardless of the land in which they were born,¹ needs to be able to see all this clearly. He needs to know what a "nation" is and what an "empire" is, and what the limits of both are. He needs to open his mind to what, in man, neither begins nor ends with man: he needs to understand universality, as the culmination of individuality brought to its climax - on the level of both knowledge and action. But above all, it is essential that, aware of the artificial decline in standards in all fields that is rampant today, he knows that there is a whole world to which he must say "no" if the aurora-*l* lights of an eventual European imperial era are to shine - beyond the world of "serfs" and "merchants".

²Cf. *Imperialismo e stile realistico*, in the *Tevere* daily of January 20, 1929.

III

1932

THE "EUROPEAN" PROBLEM AT THE "VOLTA" CONGRESS

For those who attended the "Volta" Congress recently held in Rome, at the Italian Academy, it's worth taking a *retrospective* look at the orientations and demands expressed there. Nor is it without interest to give an objective account of the results, if indeed one can speak of results.

For an entire week, participants were treated to an average of seven or eight hours of lectures and speeches of all kinds, one after the other, to which must be added the inconvenience of translations and commentaries - often unrelated to the subjects under discussion. What's more, although the original program had taken care to divide the "works" according to the particular aspects - poetic, idealistic, economic - of the European problem, the diversity of both the levels at which the analyses were carried out and the points of view continually interfered with each other. Finally - and let us be frank - what was most lacking at this meeting was a lively, creative dimension. In fact, we found something

similar to the atmosphere in Geneva*, i.e. a very "diplomatic" atmosphere: correct, but basically devoid of warmth. If a magazine such as *II Secolo Fascista* (no. 18) deplored the precautions taken by the Congress organizers "to exclude revolutionary elements of Fascism and independent culture", on the pretext that these might have "jeopardized the seriousness of the meeting, but in reality with the aim of not calling into question the prejudices and monopoly of the official culture, organizer of the Congress" - we can, for our part, only endorse this fair criticism.

In any case, we'd like to highlight some of the dominant themes that emerged most frequently from the many and varied papers presented at the "Volta" Congress.

First of all, there is a consensus on the need to tackle the *spiritual* problem of the European crisis, before we can hope to resolve the political and economic ones. Such a problem essentially leads us to examine: whether there is a unitary "European" idea; what its content is; what strength it still represents, in a world faced with changing living conditions and a changing society.

Almost all congress participants agreed that a unitary European idea *does exist*. Let's listen to Roger Nathan: "Even if the European idea could not withstand critical analysis, it represents a considerable force. Whatever the scope of its content, it is a myth that statesmen would be perfectly justified in developing and putting at the forefront of their concerns". The problem of European collaboration, the only way to resolve the crisis, presented only technical difficulties,

♦ At the time, Geneva was home to the League of Nations.

of "implementation". Count de Reynold¹, while acknowledging the absurdity of the "pan-European" idea, points out that it expresses a still confused demand, whose undeniable reality is more widespread and popular than one might think in many countries. S.E. Coppola² has underlined the sense of Europe's fundamental cultural unity, observing that, even when it is not manifested directly, it nevertheless appears in all its force as soon as one leaves this continent or experiences certain essentially "anti-European" mentalities, such as the American, Russian and Asian. For his part, the Prince de Rohan³ expressed no different ideas, alluding to the fact that, in his view, the unitary European element should not simply be spatially circumscribed, but above all conceived as a quality diffused throughout, even if it is in Europe that it is most concentrated in terms of its intensity.

In the same vein, Albert Berzeviczy declared that it was not a question of waiting for the creation of a new world, as the old world still exists as a solid starting point: old Europe will remain standing, despite the wounds of war and the bad doctors of peace. In conclusion, Erwin von Beckerath emphasized that, in the face of the last remaining ideals of level-playing-field, Europe had to remain on its feet.

¹ Count Gonzague de Reynold later contributed to *Diorama filosofico*, a special page in Roberto Farinacci's daily *II Regime Fascista*, which Evola edited from 1934 to 1943 [Note by R.D.P.].

² Francesco Coppola, nationalist and member of the Italian Academy, also contributed to Evola's *Diorama* (cf. n° 1 of February 2, 1934: *Nazione Italiana e Universalità Romana*) [Note by R.D.P.].

³ Prince Karl Anton Rohan, a leading figure in Austrian monarchist and traditionalist circles, exerted a profound influence in European conservative circles with his famous *Europäische Revue*. A great friend of Evola's, he collaborated on many of his editorial initiatives, from *Diorama* to the journal *Monarchia*, founded in 1956 under the auspices of *VUnione Monarchica Italiana* [Note by R.D.P.].

In a world of internationalism and collectivism - of which sovietism is the most characteristic - the European idea takes on a special significance insofar as it is linked to the feeling of superiority of its culture and its great national traditions - and therefore to an idea which, from the point of view of world politics, is eminently aristocratic. This sense of common superiority, according to Roger Nathan, can be a privileged link in reconciling our disunited peoples. William Martin was the only person to defend the opposite thesis, namely that the world is one, and that only international institutions can suit it from now on. Within the framework of such universal institutions, certain problems might also require specific solutions for a particular continent; however, for him, this would result not in the creation of European institutions, but in a special adaptation of such institutions. It should be noted, however, that W. Martin is more concerned here with practicality than with ideas, and that the necessary internationalization of many aspects of contemporary external life is a reality recognized by many other congress participants.

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Where opinions begin to diverge is on *the content* of such a unitary European idea. Here, we need to distinguish between the political and the cultural points of view. From a political point of view, this idea seems to be characterized by an irreducible plurality, by the personification of nations and by an asserted "love of the distinct". What unites us is also what divides us", says Nathan, "namely that it is because Europe has a *history*, a history for each particular nation, that it possesses its spiritual personality. Count de Reynold, for his part, believes that,

if we can believe in an organized, "archaic" Europe, we can't believe in a unified Europe - which is impossible and even undesirable. The essential element of Europe is its nations, which need independence, sovereignty and borders. Christopher Dawson points out that Europe is characterized by the absence of racial uniformity; that its development is linked to an existential tension, arising from a multiplicity of different races, brought together by the dynamic attraction inherent in a common goal of civilization; that Europe owes its culture to an uninterrupted process of international and interracial collaboration. As for Rosenberg and Weber, they rightly speak of European unity as an "explosive unity", into which a multiplicity of elements ready to burst and go off in all directions enter. And the same Dawson touches on an essential point, when he says that the absence of racial uniformity, which is a strength of European civilization as long as Europe is united, becomes a weakness at the precise moment when this dynamic unity disappears and the various racial elements tend to gravitate around external centers of attraction, rather than around their common European center.

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Ideas about what we might call the European tradition from a strictly cultural point of view were more vague. In this respect, we can't hide our impression that the opinions expressed were marked by a certain dilettantism, essentially due to the fact that the congress participants generally belonged to the world of politics, economics or sociology, and therefore had no particular technical skills of a historical-secular nature. As a result, whenever we ventured into the realm of the philosophy of cul-

ture, we heard nothing but hackneyed formulas, commonplaces that have had their day, were criticized and gave rise to issues of which the participants seemed to know nothing. For example, Sir Charles Petrie⁴ argued that the axis of European civilization and tradition was the idea of Rome - and immediately afterwards, identified this with Latinity and, finally, the Christian religion - which, in his opinion, should serve as the basis for the politics of any society claiming to be civilized. As if all this could be considered one and the same thing! Other speakers defined the fundamental character of Europe by the "secular-rationalist" element, without realizing the serious mutilations that would have to be inflicted on so many elements of our traditional greatness for such an idea to become reality. For Pascale Jannacone, as Europeans, we are the bearers of two fundamental ideas: that of *freedom* and that of *law*, or legal order - and it is to the periods of happy fusion of the two that we owe the highest forms, both ideal and state, of our civilization. More interesting is Alfred Weber's thesis, albeit with a somewhat "domesticated" Nietzschean flavour. For him, the origins of European civilization lie in a symbolic "horse culture", i.e. a society of nomadic warriors, in love with mobility, wide open spaces, expansion, struggle and domination. Europe owes its initial strength to the original core of races endowed with such a spirit - and victorious over races devoted to agriculture, bound to the land and to peace, patriarchal - and this strength is reflected in modern forms of technical conquest of the world, colonization and capitalist adventurism.

⁴The British Sir Charles Petrie, author of *Monarchy*, would later become an active collaborator with Evola, before and after the Second World War, from *Diorama* to *Monarchia* [Note by R.D.P.].

On this basis, Weber goes on to consider the causes of the contemporary crisis. Today, we have reached a stage where the possibilities of external irradiation have been exhausted for Europe: it is like a bundle of explosive forces that can no longer find space, to the point where, if the spirit of struggle and the intimate desire for conquest and external expansion persist, this can only lead to a self-destructive process, a definitive breakdown of equilibrium and the collapse of European unity. In the diversity of its disciplines, sport appears as a phenomenon of compensation for the original instincts of the *Y Herrenmensch*, i.e. the conqueror, the European - but this is not enough; a reversal, an internalization of such instincts is necessary, in the form of a renunciation of expansion directed outwards - which has become anachronistic and, in its military aspect pitting nations against each other, perilous - leading to their transfer to the social level: as a chivalric disposition, working for the community, guiding the masses and understanding the interests that drive them, operating a synthesis between collectivism and personalism, which rebuilds nations from within and subsequently also leads to relationships of chivalry and solidarity between nations. Christopher Dawson expresses no other idea when he speaks of the need to reverse the European centrifugal movement and regain awareness of the common spiritual ideals, intellectual traditions and poetic principles on which our civilization is founded. Once again, however, when it comes to the nature and concrete form of the reference point for such a European "introversion", we have waited in vain for him to clarify matters.

H.E. Coppola, whose speech remains among the best in his field, spoke of Europe's "guilty conscience" regarding its responsibilities in the crisis that threatens it. In reality, it is Europe itself which, through its ideologies, has given rise to, and reinforced, precisely those elements which today represent its greatest threat.

great peril. Its democratic ideology and techno-capitalist ideals have favored the birth of America (this point was later clarified during Leonardo Vitetti's speech); its humanitarian ideology and the right of peoples to self-determination (forged during the Great War) are used as ferment for the revolt of non-European peoples, once subjects of Europe and who did not question the European's right to dominate them. Faced with this situation, Coppola shows the need to return to our roots, the need to emancipate ourselves from ideologies which, in fact, do not correspond to European reality and only serve to undermine the foundations of its power. Other congressmen such as Alfred Rosenberg, Mihail Manoilescu⁵ and Willy Hellpach have, to some extent, expressed similar views.

For the Hitlerite Rosenberg, the scourge of Europe was the universalist myth, the democratic-rationalist ideology, with its conception of a "truth" and "principles" valid for all. Renaissance requires overcoming such a myth and ideology and returning to a differentiated organic conception, i.e., a return by each people to an original tradition and a truth of its own, linked to blood, which for it has an ultimate and irreducible value as the internal creative principle of any political or cultural form. Manoilescu also spoke of ideologies that are like "organic" parts, biological appendages linked to a people's specific nature and will to assert itself - and "imported" ideologies, i.e. extrinsic, "non-conforming". Europe had the illusion of finding in materialism, liberalism and the optimistic, progressive myth, a "con-

⁵ Mihail Manoilescu, a legionnaire in the Romanian Iron Guard founded by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, became Minister of Foreign Affairs in June 1940 [Note by R.D.P.].

But this illusion has vanished. Fascism, Bolshevism, neo-spiritualism and cultural pessimism are new forces that have erupted, sweeping away the illusory unity and imposing the problem of a European reconstruction that is both realistic and organic. Willy Hellpach also spoke of the crisis of humanist education and its inherent universalism - a crisis that needs to be overcome by a new European realism based on the technical domination of nature on the one hand, and on the development of civilization in a national direction on the other - but he didn't bother to show how the contradictions between such premises could be overcome. In the end, the Prince de Rohan's conceptions bring us back to the same point. He sees three main forces at work in today's culture: firstly, the traditional religious idea, which, with the advent of free thought and criticism, is nonetheless demonstrating a most uncertain effectiveness; secondly, secularized reason as science and philosophy, which has so far proved incapable of providing Europe with an integral unitary conception, but also of overcoming the recurrent pluralism and individualism of the various philosophical systems, and of supplementing the experimental positivist approach with principles of a higher order ; Bolshevism, finally, as the type of a new, activist, realist and unitary mentality - but only at the cost of destroying all traditional values. For Rohan, it's a question of overcoming Bolshevism by creating a type that is also revolutionary, organic and realistic, but spiritually integrated, capable of being simultaneously "traditional" in its inner orientation and behavior. This is also the idea developed by Comte de Reynold, who posits as "European" the ideal of *personalism* as the overcoming of both anarchic individualism and standardized mass; as a remedy, he places his hopes in the birth of a new classi-

cism, not academic and formal, but in the sense evoked by Goethe when he wrote: "I call classical what is healthy, and romantic what is sick. He denounces "idealism", understood as that which, by creating confusion between the real and the spiritual, makes impossible that *adaequatio rei et intellectus* in which "truth" consists; he is, finally, a conservative: not of errors but of certainties, not of what is dead but of what is alive, conceiving tradition in such a way that it implies a dynamism, a forward march, that it is a "style", an "orientation" - "a conception of becoming subordinated to a conception of being".

The same Reynold says that if the 18th century saw a "conspiracy of philosophers" to destroy the old world, today we're witnessing a "conspiracy of intellectuals", a "constructive Encyclopedia", which will give birth to a new world. This, in essence, is the point on which the majority of opinions converge, and which practically constitutes the conclusion and wish of the "Volta" Congress.

For the majority of participants, once the differentiation and individuality of nations has been accepted as a fundamentally "European" element, European unity on the external, political level can only be conceived in terms of a common front against common perils - whether internal (Marxism, plutocracy) or external - or in terms of common undertakings in the event of new phases of expansion. On the domestic front, however, a more positive and concrete unity is possible in the spiritual and cultural spheres. According to R. According to R. Nathan - and his idea seems right to us - the fundamental point here is to recognize that a spiritual and ethical community exists above the state, and that the state is only of value as an intermediary, enabling the individual to participate in this community. For Frantisek Weyr, culture spontaneously possesses a unifying tendency: as soon as states have formed units of interest that are purely spiritual and ethical, the state has a role to play.

The major obstacle would be politics, in the narrow sense, and all that goes with it, to which higher forms of activity are subservient. The major obstacle would be politics, in the narrow sense, and everything connected with it, to which higher forms of activity are subservient. A spiritual nationalism - von Beckerath adds - cannot come into conflict with the European idea: today, the need for solidarity cannot arise from rationalist constructs, but will only become a reality thanks to a traditional spiritual inner attitude, which Europe already bears within itself. Gabriele Gabrielli, after quoting Mazzini's words: "It is necessary to elevate the nation to the concept of humanity, but without nations, humanity cannot exist", he referred in particular to the goal of forming an intellectual aristocracy in every country (at an equal distance from the monastic style of the "ivory towers" and that of ideology in the service of classes or parties) - to proceed, therefore, to a spiritual integration of the various nations, in a way that is as contemporary as possible, and on which a concrete European solidarity can be founded. He rightly warns of a possible danger: "Above all, we must prevent culture from becoming a formidable weapon in the service of racial imperialism". In the text he submitted (having been unable to attend the Congress physically), Stefan Zweig spoke of a "moral detoxification of Europe", consisting in eliminating the instinct for struggle and hatred aroused and deliberately encouraged in the context of the Great War, stressing that this instinct, which today no longer finds an outlet, could produce tensions, antagonisms and upheavals, in all fields. But when he goes on to propose a new type of education which, instead of considering the separatist military aspect in the history of peoples, should accustom new generations to considering the spiritual and cultural aspect which unites them, he ends up with a rather suspicious pacifism that smacks of bourgeois literati. By asserting that the reconstitution of European consciousness is first and foremost a problem of thought before being a problem of action

politics and that, consequently, intellectuals in the political sphere should no longer be regarded as "individuals without a mandate", as if this were the "preserve" of people incapable, in fact, of any higher-order vision - Alfred Rébelliau, for his part, said something very sensible.

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However vague the doctrinal conceptions of the content of the European idea and its metapolitical values, which are likely to play the role of symbols in its defense - from the latter point of view, relating to European collaboration and unity on an intellectual level - the congressmen gathered at the aristocratically elegant Roman "Farnesina" undoubtedly gave us the impression of having a conciliatory spirit and "good intentions".

Only time will tell to what extent these good intentions are truly sincere and have the strength to translate into reality - or to what extent, conversely, they belong to those of which Catholic teaching speaks when it says that "the road to hell is paved with good intentions".

IV

1937

ON THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE EMPIRE

The problem of empire, in its highest sense, is that of a supranational organization such that unity does not act to destroy and level out the ethnic and cultural multiplicity it encompasses.

Thus posed, the problem of empire admits of two main types of solution: if the first is *legal*, the second is *spiritual*.

For the former, the unity of the empire is that of a simple politico-administrative organization, a general law of order, in the most empirical sense of the term. In this hypothesis, the specific qualities, cultures and traditions of the various peoples united within the empire are not harmed, simply because the empire remains indifferent and alien to them. Here, the only thing that matters to the empire is simple political-administrative organization combined with pure legal sovereignty. The empire behaves towards peoples in exactly the same way as the liberal agnostic state behaved towards private individuals, allowing them to do as they please, provided certain general laws are respected.

In modern times, a typical example of an empire conceived in this way is the British Empire. Cer-

Some (Bryce, for example) have sought to establish an analogy, based on similar criteria, between the British Empire and that of ancient Rome. Even in our own country, historians have not failed to fall into the same error of considering the Roman Empire solely in terms of its legal and political aspects, and neglecting - or treating as incidental - any higher-order premise, be it spiritual or religious.

It's no less true that with Rome, an imperial organization of the *second type* is already taking shape, corresponding, in other words, to the second solution. In this case, unity is determined by something spiritually more eminent than the particularism of all that is conditioned by the ethnic and naturalistic element.

In ancient Rome, this kind of reality existed for two reasons.

Firstly, by virtue of the presence of a unique type and ideal corresponding to the *civis romanus*, which was by no means, as some imagine, a pure legal formula, but an ethical reality, a human model with supranational value.

Secondly, Rome established the *imperial cult* as a transcendent point of reference. The Roman *Pantheon*, as we know, welcomed symbols of all the faiths and ethnic-spiritual traditions of the races subject to Rome, which the latter respected and sometimes protected. But the presupposition and condition of this hospitality and protection was a "fidelity" (la *fides*) of a higher order. Above the religious symbols assembled in the *Pantheon*, the symbol of the Emperor was enthroned, conceived as *numen*, as a divine being: he embodied the very transcendent and spiritual unity of the empire, for the empire of Roman tradition was conceived less as a merely human work than as that of the forces above. Fidelity to this symbol was the primary condition. Once the oath of loyalty had been sworn in the form of a sacred rite, any particular faith or tradition was no longer a matter of dispute.

of the subjugated peoples - insofar as it did not harm or offend Roman ethics and general law - was accepted and respected.

It's in these terms that ancient Rome presents itself to us as an example of imperial organization of eternal and universal value.

Indeed, simply replacing the time-conditioned forms of a solution such as this with other forms is enough to sweep away any appearance of anachronism - and to realize that anyone wishing to tackle the problem of a spiritual empire today would be unable to envisage any other perspective.

What would indeed be far more "anachronistic" today would be to envisage a supranational organization based on the affirmation of a particular religious idea, even a Christian one. No one can reasonably consider the idea of returning to a Spanish-style, ultra-Catholic, inquisitorial empire like that of Charles V to be current. But even if we exclude this extreme yet coherent form, other, vaguer and more "intellectual" formulas for supranational unity based unilaterally on religion nonetheless show, on analysis, the same flaw. In the context of a vast entity such as the empire, we cannot ignore the fact that many religious traditions exist, most of them of comparable dignity and spiritual elevation. If the empire were to resort to violence to achieve its unity, basing it on the affirmation and recognition of one religion to the detriment of others, it is clear that we would be faced with a manifestation of sectarianism rather than spiritual universalism.

The imperial example of Fascism already seems to indicate a move beyond this perspective. Indeed, in the Fascist empire, Catholicism represents the national religion of the Italian people, while the empire simultaneously declares itself the protector of Islam, and has recognized and respected the Coptic religion as well.

What does this mean, if not that fascism asserts the need for a point of reference that already goes beyond that of a particular religious faith? We say "beyond" and not "apart from", for we must bear in mind that fascism also possesses an ethic, a spirituality, a human type, an aspiration to translate into terms of dominating will the sense of a permanent and universal reality. It cannot therefore be a matter of simple, indifferent, agnostic respect, along the lines of the first of the two solutions we mentioned at the outset, but rather of the principle of a higher, "Roman" realization.

Having recognized this, the general problem of the empire's spiritual premises consists in defining the principle by which we can simultaneously recognize and transcend any particular religious faith of the nations that make it up. This is the fundamental point. Empire, in the true sense of the word, can only exist if it is animated by a spiritual fervour, a faith, something that draws on the same spiritual sources from which religion derives its *raison d'être*. If this is lacking, all we'll ever have is a creation forged by violence - "imperialism" - a mere mechanical, soulless superstructure. This is why it is necessary to harness - so to speak - the very forces at work within religious faiths, without in the least harming them, but rather integrating and sublimating them. And there's a way to do this: *it's revealed to us by the notion that every spiritual tradition and every religion is merely the particular expression of a unique content, prior and superior to each of its various expressions*. Knowing how to trace this unique and, as it were, super-traditional content would also mean having a solid basis for founding a unity that does not destroy, but rather integrates all particular faiths, thus defining an imperial "fidelity" precisely by reference to this higher-order content. *Transcend*, according to the Latin etymology,

means "to rise above": the whole essence of the problem is contained in this word.

For the moment, let's confine ourselves to these general outlines: they will serve as a starting point in a later article for considerations that will shed more light on the concept developed in these columns.

1940

ENGLAND AND THE DECLINE OF THE IDEA OF EMPIRE

It is absolutely vital today that the ups and downs of the current material and military conflict do not divert attention from certain questions of principle, which are, in fact, the only ones capable of giving this very conflict its true and profound meaning, while indicating the reference points around which a new order and a new type of civilization can crystallize¹.

In this respect, two problems seem fundamental to us. Both are linked to an interpretation of the current conflict as a phenomenon of potential reconstruction and restoration, intended less to "revolutionize" in the worst sense of the word, than to renew, seeking to re-establish im system that is once again faithful to the fundamental principles of any normal, traditional civilization.

The first of these problems concerns the question of colonies and the right to colonies. The second, the idea of Empire. In both cases, the issue was called into question, the most flagrant example of which we have to cite.

¹ Cf. J. Evola, *Il conflitto attuale e il crepuscolo dei miti*, in *Lo Stato*, XI, 5, May 1940, pp. 222-225 [Note by R.D.P.].

is given by England, given the significance of its domination and hegemony within the general history of civilization.

On more than one occasion, both in our various books and in articles published in this magazine, we have alluded to the impossibility of understanding the true meaning of the main events of the historical cycle to which the contemporary world also belongs, and of overcoming one-sided, superficial and subjective interpretations, if we do not refer to the traditional idea that the history of recent centuries has, in its broad outlines, the significance of an *involution*. This involution essentially concerns the type of values that give a civilization or group of cultures its general tone, and which therefore also influence the political and social order, and finally the legal forms - national and international - corresponding to this order. And we have clarified a concept like this by recalling that, in the integral hierarchical model as realized more than once in premodern history, notably among peoples of Aryan origin, the pattern was as follows: at the top, a purely spiritual authority; immediately below, a warrior nobility; then the bourgeois and mercantile class and, finally, the mass of workers. If, in ancient times, distinct castes or classes corresponded to such differentiations, here we need to consider, above all, the general, "typological" aspect, relating to four kinds of preoccupations, ideals, conceptions of life - we could even say to four "races of the spirit" - hierarchically ordered.

The overall direction of Western history is therefore that of involution, since it is quite clear that civilizations whose dominant tone was set by purely spiritual authority belong to the distant past; with the revolutions, the later type of civilization has also disappeared (or been profoundly altered): one in which the values proper to a warrior and heroic aristocracy and, on the political level, the monarchic and dynastic principle have been replaced by the values proper to the aristocracy.

tic model. Finally, Marxism, collectivism and Bolshevism were also about to overthrow the type of civilization born of the decline of the monarchical, warlike and feudal model - i.e., bourgeois civilizations - in order to give power to the world of the socialized, materialized masses, and bring their own values and "ideals" to the fore. If we don't take this schema as a point of reference - which is not, let's repeat, a personal construction but corresponds to an objective reality - we'll be left with a superficial vision of things, and we won't be able to orient ourselves properly. That's why we thought it appropriate to reiterate this point once again.

On the basis of such a conception, how should the current conflict be interpreted, and what roles do its protagonists play? Today, people are talking about the fight against plutocratic democracy, in terms that are practically those of a slogan. As a starting point, this is an excellent thing. But we need to be more precise about the historical and spiritual "heutag" of plutocratic democracy. It seems to us, quite clearly, to be the survivor of that phase of Western decadence when power, authority and the right to wealth passed into the hands of a class corresponding to the old merchant caste or mercantile bourgeoisie - which, normally, should have remained subservient to the representatives of a warrior aristocracy whose justification lay, for its part, in its reference to transcendent, purely spiritual values.

Unfortunately, the sensibility of our contemporaries has been anaesthetized by triumphant materialism, so that at most they consider - led to do so solely by instinct and the effects of catastrophic material consequences - that a world controlled by bourgeois plutocracy is a world of injustice. But to speak of injustice is as vague as it is indeterminate. What we should be talking about is *degradation* and *usurpation* - all the rest being mere consequences.

-This is a degradation and usurpation of a higher conception of right, and a higher legitimization of power and empire. That power is defined by wealth, by gold, and that the "powerful" nations thus conceived, without any other title of superiority, control the world and make it rain and shine - this is much less an "injustice" than something absurd, abnormal, irrational. It's a situation analogous to that of a body in which the functions of animal vegetative life, by hypertrophying, tend to take over the direction of the whole, subjugating every other force, every other faculty: it's a purely pathological and teratological phenomenon.

The importance of considering the enemy to be fought from this particular angle lies in the fact that it also clarifies the values which, on the other side of the coin, should be increasingly emphasized, so as to avoid certain 180° turns which can already be seen in some of the "myths" being disseminated to the masses. We won't go back over what we said in these columns a short while ago. We will simply mention this fundamental point: if the current conflict is to assume a higher, constructive, "revi- sionist" significance in the history of civilization, it will be less by resolving the problem of domination as *fact* than that of domination as *right*.

Two interpretations are both abusive and dangerous. The first could be described as "successionist": it's the interpretation of those who believe that the war is simply a matter of changing the guard, a "Get out of my way so I can get on with it", in order to inherit the wealth currently held by oligarchic democracy. The second is, of course, the Marxist and proletarian interpretation, in the broadest sense of the term: it would lower the spiritual level of the motives and objectives of the current conflict to that of the myth of communist world revolution,

determined to eliminate bourgeois and capitalist states, and "socialize" and proletarianize their wealth, within the framework of a society essentially dominated by the values of the fourth and last caste, as described in the above diagram of the stages in the general process of involution. It's true that those who favour such an interpretation point out that the struggle for international "social justice" is not today being waged by an undifferentiated proletariat, but by national states. Yet the very fact of emphasizing this should highlight the non-exclusively material and social motives that animate this struggle, and distinguish it from the similarly anti-bourgeois, anti-plutocratic and anti-democratic struggle that the Third International could wage, including against states that are also our adversaries. To dispel any pretext for such a materialist interpretation, we need to emphasize the relativity of the concept of "peoples without space", using a banal but suggestive example. Let's take the Eastern peoples as a whole, and suppose that, thanks to timely propaganda, they are induced to adopt a policy of excessive demography, while at the same time being convinced that the precarious standard of living of the majority is unjust and lamentable: an enormous mass will thus have been created, allegedly "without space", which, according to the materialist criterion, would have the "right" to assert itself over other peoples and other territories. It is not sheer numbers, however, that entitle us to "wide open spaces" and hegemony: such a conception can only be true at the level of civilization proper to the last of the four human types indicated above. If we look back to Aryan origins, and in particular to Rome, it is precisely a right of a totally different nature that has always been recognized: the right of a minority, of a restricted group of conquerors, over the masses and space - a right based, in the examples given above, precisely on the virtues proper to elites, irreducible to mere material factors and linked to the "greatness of space".

contrary to heroic, aristocratic values and pure spiritual authority.

This brings us back to the crucial point. Today, it's essentially a question of contesting the right of a usurping elite and substituting a new elite. Consequently, it's also a question of replacing a counterfeit of empire, proper to the former, with a conception of empire that refers first and foremost to its original, higher meaning. This is why we have spoken of a "restorative" war, instead of sacrificing ourselves to today's mechanistic misuse of the word "revolution".

Revolution, no doubt, but in a relative sense: as revolt against an illusory order which, moreover, has historically been born of revolutions (in the subversive sense) that have prevailed up to now. But this is only the contingent and instrumental aspect of the current upheavals. If these upheavals are really to lead to something positive, their essential characteristic, over and above the clearing away of rubble, must be a return to origins.

Now it's time to say a few words about England, as a significant example of the hierarchical perversion we've been talking about. It is indeed a significant example because, unlike France and the United States, England has preserved and maintained an image of the old traditional forms: it has a monarchy, a nobility, in part even of feudal origin, and a fairly acute sense of caste. But all this is a kind of automatic survival, having lost its original function, which no longer constitutes its center - which has sunk to the level of the spirit and interests of the merchant caste.

England was the first nation in Europe to desecrate the imperial title: offered by the Jew Disraeli to British monarchs, the title ceased to have the meaning of a superior civilizing orientation and a supranational spiritual mission, and became comparable to the

The title of "Emperor of India" refers to a conquest which, more than any other, in a certain sense resembled a "barbarian invasion". Clearly, at the time the Indies were occupied by the English, they possessed an eminently spiritual civilization, born of the common Indo-European, i.e. Aryan, trunk, in contrast to the materialism of the British of the "India Company" with their vulgar appetite for wealth.

It's true that we can speak of a heroic cycle of English colonial conquest: the remnants of a warrior civilization - that is, of the second caste and type - but without the slightest reference to truly spiritual values, originally created English greatness. But very soon the merchant, and the spirit of the merchant, prevailed over them, in a natural coalition with certain stateless elements, assuming the administration and exploitation of this greatness - while what remained of the warrior elements became a mere militia at the service of their interests.

This deterioration, this inversion, has gradually stabilized, and is clearly visible in certain very specific symptoms in the field of ethics. Since the "Empire" came into being, where can we find anything in England that really conforms to the old *gentlemanly* ethic, which was at one with the style and sense of honor and loyalty of the Aryan warrior elite? Where is *fair play*, the ancient precept that it's not the outcome of the fight that matters, but the style, the way of behaving in it? Imperial" England has made the most cynical Machiavellianism its technique.

Hypocrisy - the least *gentlemanly* and most Judaic disposition imaginable - marks its corner in political *praxis*. England preaches "freedom of the seas" when this is identified with English hegemony over the sea.

to protect the "free trade" monopolized by Judeo-British merchants. It became the paladin of "international law" and "the freedom of peoples", in the exclusive defense of its own interests. Unable to assert its will to dominate in a virile, "Aryan" manner, it has not hesitated to resort to the rhetoric of humanitarianism and sentimentalism, to mobilize energies in its service and to incite participation in a conflict which - like that of 1914-1918 - had the sole aim of consolidating and extending its imperialism. None of this has any of the characteristics of a superior, warrior race, worthy of the Empire. On the contrary, it is the merchant caste and the Jewish race that betray themselves here. The virtues still present in certain English elements are no more than survivals; they can only be admired by those who stop at outward appearance and fail to realize that, behind a certain "style", there is, in most cases, nothing but emptiness. The most ridiculous and despicable type of operetta king is the Duke of Windsor - whose case sheds a revealing light on what lies behind the façade of England's highest social class.

If England can therefore be considered as the proxy for an "empire", it must be said that the throne has been vacant for a long time, waiting for someone to assume its succession.

And what is essential, above and beyond any conflict or problem of space and "social justice", is to know precisely *who*, ideally, will ultimately assume this succession.

Faced with the current situation, we may be led to believe that History, by creating irrational and unbearable material situations that finally call for a reaction, tends to lead men to a new order that they are not directly able to perceive. We are thus witnessing a "heterogenesis of ends", i.e., the emergence, by force of circumstance, of motivations that

transcend original intentions and immediate motives. The most blatant example of this is the overcoming, today in action, of positivist and rationalist international law, and even of the "atomistic", neutral and agnostic concept of national sovereignties - an exact reflection, at international level, of what was, within a state, the liberal-individualist conception of particular individuals. State borders wavered. Ethnic and political groupings are now emerging that can no longer be defined solely on the basis of the idea of state, national state or even race. From the very realm of matter, economics and geopolitical factors, new forces are emerging that can only be adequately and creatively applied within the framework of vast new zones and spheres of influence. This is why the force of things tends to impose a return to the true idea of empire in the traditional sense.

We can't yet predict the material and legal form that such an idea might take, if it really took hold. Be that as it may, its first postulate is that the problem of colonies and raw materials should be settled as best and as quickly as possible, that space should be given to those who need it, and that similar revisions should be carried out, so as to eliminate any imperialist counterfeit of the imperial idea, to prevent its return in any form, and to prevent material motives from again succeeding in usurping the dignity of ideals and playing a predominant and destructive role in the formation and destiny of the community of European peoples. In a word, the problem of international "social justice" and rational administration of overseas wealth must be put in its place once and for all, to block the pretensions of those who, under this pretext, are basically aiming for socializing and anti-traditional action, radically ignoring the fact that the mission of our Restorative Revolutions is truly spiritual.

As regards the hierarchical formation of new imperial conglomerates and the graduation of sovereignties within the framework of a new, truly organic and differentiated European law, the second condition - as required by the idea of empire - is to emphasize values that are not mass (fourth stage) or mercantile (third stage), but heroic and then genuinely spiritual, for it is only on the basis of these that a genuine supranational guiding authority can be defined. In this respect, however, we need to go beyond general formulations and come up with precise ideas, to be defended with absolute intransigence.

The words "superior civilizing mission", "work of civilization" and other similar phrases are often used when similar problems arise, but for those who know how to look at things in depth, they are 4à commonplaces that contribute nothing. It's on the very concept of civilization that we should begin to agree, for while it may express a higher consumption of soap, aeroplanes and radio, the number of kilometers of roads and bridges, social hygiene organizations and so on, in itself it is far superior to all that. Moreover, it has little to do with the "arts and sciences" - everyone knowing today that the former are reduced to the frivolous exercises of intellectuals deprived of authority and all too often of character, and that the latter are mere appendages of materialistic, mechanical civilization.

If the guiding idea of the new imperial law is to be defined in heroic, and therefore spiritual, terms, the first step must be to encourage the formation of new warrior and aristocratic elites, endowed with the corresponding authority, at the apex of the states destined to take over from the plutocracies in terms of hegemony and spheres of influence. As we have already alluded to here, it is to be hoped that, in this respect, the very experience of the new conflict and its possible developments will give shape to a

materia prima, capable of integrating the potential already present in anti-democratic, anti-Bolshevik states.

The second stage, the properly spiritual one, called upon to consecrate and thus legitimize in a higher sense the imperial and supranational right of the warrior elites, constitutes a far more important problem. Those who oppose - and rightly so - the postulates and principles of "positive" international law, as soon as they seriously seek the legal form that could replace it and suit an imperial-type structure, must necessarily find a solution to this problem. It must be realized that this now moribund international law was the only one, basically, which could, by virtue of its formal and agnostic character, be suitable for a materialistic and secular society. But apart from this "modern" law, all other conceptions of law have always had sacral and suprapolitical premises: either overtly, or by derivation, tacitly. This was the case for ancient Aryan law in Eastern civilizations, for early Roman law, and again for medieval law. Without a "sacred" premise, a hierarchically-based supranational right cannot be legitimized: at most, a set of practical administrative rules can be created with reference to a plan that is more "imperialist" than imperial. This is how the legal problem, if not bogged down in academic and technical considerations, once again leads us back to the problem of a supratemporal and suprapolitical authority: for only the forms justified by this authority will not be able to present the character of a constraint, a coercion, a norm extrinsic to particular political and temporal organizations and to specific forms of territorial sovereignty included in the imperial space.

If we don't want to be seen as bad prophets, we'll have to leave this question hanging for now, until we see which peoples will be brought together in the new imperial conglomerates. While clearly stating-

If, on the other hand, the supra-political postulate of the new law is inescapably necessary, we may even be led to wonder whether we really need to speak of a common European law or whether, on the contrary, a certain articulation should be envisaged within such a law. When we speak of the old common European law, we must never forget that, as a historical reality, it belonged to a time when, firstly, religion (in the real, not just formal, sense) played a role in the public and private life of Europe, something we no longer encounter today; secondly, and even more importantly, we must not forget that, at that time, the schism of the Reformation had not yet occurred. To reunite Europe under the banner of Catholicism, for example, would be a pure gamble, if we consider that at a much more propitious historical moment - that of the Holy Alliance - such an ambition proved chimerical. That's why, let's repeat, when faced with such a problem, we first need to see what direction the new potentially imperial aggregations will take - all the more so since, as we've seen, they seem to be formed more by force of circumstance than by the mature reflection of men. Only then will we be in a position to study what authority from on high will be able to animate the inter-European legal forms appropriate to them, so that these forms can result from adherence, not compulsion, and so that we can move from the stage of imperial *aggregations* to that of genuine imperial *organizations*.

VI

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APPROACHES OF THE EUROPEAN IDEA

If we were to consider the main predictable results of the implicitly revolutionary action of the present world conflict - which are the result less of mature human reflection than of the very force of things and events - we would, broadly speaking, be led to note the following:

1) The concepts of sovereignty and "international law" of the period immediately preceding us are in the process of being liquidated. The rigid division of the surface of the globe by means of impermeable territorial borders - theoretically corresponding to those of a political sovereignty that would be its own *raison d'être* - is being replaced by the idea of a division into spaces grouping together various ethnic groups and particular political units according to more real and organic affinities.

2) Correlatively, the previously accepted idea (of essentially formalist and "positivist" inspiration) of "international law" bites the dust. In place of abstract principles claiming to have the same validity for any State - and therefore considered "atomically", in defiance of the diversity of possibilities, power and unequal dignity of peoples - we now have "international law".

is the idea of a new law: articulated and supranational, this adjective to be understood not in a generic (i.e. universalist) way, but in relation to the principles and ideas that will form the respective basis of each of the new spaces, encompassing several nations.

3) As far as naming such supranational spaces is concerned, we feel that the now widely-used term "vital space" is inappropriate, as it places too much emphasis on the purely material aspect of the problem. As we wrote in our previous article, the current conflict will only take on a higher significance if it does not simply lead to a "changing of the guard" in terms of European imperialism and material hegemony, distorting the right to "living space" that certain peoples - our own - can claim vis-à-vis the so-called "plutocratic" nations. Today's war can take on a higher, truly revolutionary meaning, provided we understand precisely the need to go beyond "imperialism" - a purely material and political fact, in the most inferior sense of the term - and return to the idea of *empire*, which has always corresponded to a spiritual fact and a right to domination of a higher essence.

4) What we can already foresee, as things stand, is simply the imminent formation of *imperial aggregations*, to borrow a felicitous expression from Carlo Costamagna¹.

However, the fundamental problem for the new order to be established after the Axis victory will be the transition from imperial *aggregations* to imperial *organizations*.

¹ A renowned writer and jurist, Carlo Costamagna was the editor of the monthly magazine *Lo Stato*, from which this article, the previous one and the next are taken. After the war, in the 1950s, Costamagna was to be found alongside Evola in the counter-offensive launched by the first journals of the National Right [Note by R.D.P.].

5) This problem, as Costamagna himself pointed out, will have to take into account three types of concern: *economic complementarity* (which will settle the question of "vital spaces" in the literal, i.e. material, sense of the term); *racial background*; and *civilizational affinity* or, we would prefer to say, *civilizational funeness*.

6) The fact that this last element is decisive stems from the fact that where there is no living unity, there is no real organization. However, it would be futile to look for it at the level of a material economic and administrative structure; at the level of national and ethnic affinities, it would be just as problematic, given the strength, in this area, of traditional inclinations, ambitions and pride, which are inevitably particularistic in nature. It is therefore on the spiritual level, and in the form of a "unity of civilization", that we must seek the reagent capable of ensuring that, within the new *imperial spaces*, imperial aggregations actually become *organizations* and, as such, provide a sufficient guarantee of the stability of the new order.

Now, in our article quoted above, as on many other occasions, we have emphasized that, when we speak of "civilization" in the context of the objectives of the new order, we must begin by reviewing *from top to bottom* the concept of civilization that has come to prevail in modern times, and in an ever more virulent fashion since the French Revolution and Encyclopedism. This civilization, which boils down to the "sciences" and "arts" as conceived by the moderns, which is therefore inseparable from mechanicism and rationalism, and which seriously believes that the alibi for its "superiority" lies in technical conquests (not to mention "social" conquests), is something that has no face, something essentially international and neutral, which therefore cannot provide, on any grounds whatsoever, the premises for a well-differentiated, hierarchical order.

On the contrary, it's heroic, aristocratic, traditional and even sacred values that should be given prominence: they should be used as leverage to build new imperial spaces. But the current situation is particularly unfavorable, precisely because with the advent and universal dissemination of *Vautre* civilisation, mechanical and internationalist, such values have been diluted and dispersed. Bringing them together in new crystallization centers, destined in turn to be both the soul and the cement of new supranational societies, is an objective about whose difficulties we should have no illusions. For this reason, it would be particularly risky to point to any idea in Europe today that is already sufficiently complete, alive and vigorous to serve, without having to look any further, as a foundation for the task outlined above. What is indispensable, however, is to proceed with a process of mutual integration, awakening and reinforcement. We are moving towards the idea of a European civilization, or, if you like, towards the "idea of Europe", but the details are still spiritually vague.

Just as European revolutionary action has its origins in the Axis powers, so it is clear that the original and essential core of European construction must be based on the potential and spiritual heritage of the two Axis powers. The primary objective - the premise of all further development and aggregation - will therefore be to specify the terms on which the Italian - or, better still, Roman - and Germanic elements can be integrated and mutually reinforced within the framework of an idea of Europe. Here, we seem to be witnessing the return of a historical cycle. In other words, something similar to what happened during the creation of the last authentic European imperial civilization - that of the Middle Ages - essentially born of the symbiosis of the Roman and Germanic elements, seems to be taking shape or imposing itself.

Such a problem also leads logically to a second leitmotif of national-socialist political doctrine, in which some authors have tried to see an irreducible point of divergence from the fascist idea. We are referring to the highly suspect concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, or "national-racial community", and the idea that the *Volk*, the "people-race", is the legitimization and very foundation of the political authority of the state and of the *Führer* himself. Indeed, according to this ideology, the State is a secondary element, while the *Volk* is the primary element, the *Volk* being the container and the *Volk* the content: the *Volk* is the foundation of the State. For Fascism, however, the opposite is true: it is the State that founds the people, the national-racial community, the nation. The nation, as Mussolini put it, exists only in and through the state.

Clearly, if we want to identify a concept of government and political authority that can serve as an axis of reference in a space that is no longer national, but supranational and imperial, it is not the National Socialist concept, but the Fascist concept, that offers the most coherent premise. An authority that legitimizes itself exclusively by means of a given *Volk* can never assume any value beyond the limits of that *Volk*, except by coercion. The situation is quite different when, with Fascism, a certain distance is established between the nation and the power which, as a state, organizes it - including, to a certain extent, from above. Such a power possesses an intrinsic force and, *ideally*, is superior to the nation: we can therefore envisage a process that will elevate it, sublimate it, unify it to the point of naturally giving it a value beyond the very limits of the people within which it was originally asserted and concretized.

That said, it's quite clear that certain anti-Roman animosities professed by certain extremist national-socialist circles - who had made Romanity their own

a completely tendentious and erroneous idea - now belong to the past. The same is true of the lawsuit that the same circles wanted to bring against the best aspects of German tradition itself - against Charlemagne, the Hohenstaufens, not to mention the Habsburgs - against whom even today in Germany, for contingent reasons that are well known to all, one-sided and harsh slogans continue to circulate. On the other hand, a "Romanization" of National Socialism seems to us to be an inalienable condition for Germany to be able to assume, within its vital space, an effectively imperial function and prevent any form of imperialist deviation².

The anti-Roman prejudices to which we have alluded were partly the result of erroneous assimilations. Thus, for example, genuine Roman law was confused with a law that would have been better described as Napoleonic, and which was influenced by a natural law that, in the organic whole formed by the Roman "imperial space", was only the mark of exhaustion and decadence. A similar confusion, albeit less far-reaching, is due to the assimilation of Romanity and the Catholic Church - with all the implications this implies, particularly in Protestant circles. We ourselves have recognized that Romanity, in conjunction with Catholicism, played a role in the formation of medieval imperial civilization. But it's important to consider *what kind of Catholicism was involved*. True Roman law was not "universalist" in the modern, rationalist, encyclopedist sense of the term; it embodied the shape of a well-defined imperial space, founded on a type - also perfectly defined - of human ideal and civilization. Similarly, Catholicism

² On this subject, Evola's *La romanité, le germanisme et la "Lumière du Nord"*, in *L'Arc et la Massue*, Guy Trédaniel-Pardès, Paris-Puiseaux, 1984, pp. 163-180 [N.D.T.], is a useful reference.

The medieval "Christendom" to which missionnarism contributed through its political and military activity was essentially identified with the community of European Aryan nations, conceived as an organic, fighting unit that worshipped the ethics of honor and loyalty far more than the virtues of renunciation and universal humanitarian embraces.

If we stop at this stage - "virile" in its own way - of Catholicism, then it's perfectly possible to see in such a tradition something that doesn't necessarily contradict the Roman or Germanic ideal. A point of reference similar to that offered by Catholicism for the construction of medieval civilization will be necessary and indispensable for the new order itself. If imperialism means the part that imposes itself on other parts, exploits them and administers them, empire must assume, conversely, the function of guidance and superior justice of a *unum quod non est pars* - but which cannot be such without reference to supratemporal, i.e. transcendent, values.

At the same time, we have succinctly indicated the general aspect under which a Catholic component could, together with others, be aggregated with a view to forming spiritual centers specific to the new imperial spaces, in solidarity with the properly Roman component.

As for the Germanic component, of which feudal society was the manifestation, it can be enhanced in two ways: either technically, in the sense of a relative decentralization and distribution, or graduation, of partial politico-territorial sovereignties; or spiritually and ethically, through the creation of clear, personalized relationships: of dependence for those below, of responsibility for those above. In reality, it's impossible to imagine the structure of the new imperial formations in any coherent form other than as a "feudal" system, i.e. one based on "central eminent right and partial sovereignties".

tielles" - *imperium eminens et jus singulare*. In passing, we might point out that the formula "protectorates" once adopted basically reflected the same idea: the feudal bond was established by the subordination and *fides* of one of the parties, matched by the "protection" of the other. Clearly, such a principle could only be fruitful and of positive value in a phase of normalization, during which the peaceful, clear and dignified feeling of *nationalities* would replace the exasperation, virulence and intransigence of *nationalism*. In such a phase, whether in relation to a given people, individual or class, we will once again be able to experience the conviction that, even between peoples, there exists a kind of dependence which is in no way humiliating or degrading, but which is, on the contrary, a source of pride, since it establishes bonds of participation in a civilizing mission and commits the one who commands to the one who obeys.

As we discuss the notion of "superior" and "inferior" in the context of relations between European peoples, it should be stressed that these terms should never be taken in an absolute sense. In this field, it is always possible to emphasize the racial element in order to "homogenize" as much as possible the substance gathered in an imperial space, so that differentiation concerns less various degrees of intensity than actual differences in quality.

To deal with this problem in depth, we must recognize that it is inseparable from that of *interracial selections*. We shall confine ourselves here to a brief examination of the question, having already dealt with it extensively elsewhere. Anyone who today speaks of race with more or less explicit reference to the common ethnic type predominating in a given nation (and this is the case when, in the newspapers, one speaks of the "Italian race", the "German race", the "Slavic race", etc.), cannot invoke basic ethnic elements in a pure state, but rather more or less homogeneous ethnic compounds with sufficient stability to be considered as a whole.

health. In such compounds, various races can be found in greater or lesser quantities; and it's hard to name a European people in which at least one other of the main European races listed by doctrinaire racism is not present to some extent. So the problem of "homogeneity" is a relative one, and to pose it rigidly would be to pose it badly. The important thing is not to look at the gross percentage by which a given race is represented in a given nation, but to see *which* race, in that nation, would have, or should have, the leading function, and whose turn it would be to set the "tone" for the whole. In this way, we enter a field of potentialities, dynamic relationships and spiritual influences. Certainly, the fundamental condition for imperial spaces to truly possess an organic structure concerns the particular relief and specific guiding function which, within the nations included in such spaces, will be given to racial and spiritual elements similar to those of which the properly imperial nations present the greatest concentration. Insofar as the two poles of the Axis must also be those of the two largest imperial spaces, this substance - destined, so to speak, to serve as a cement, by way of affinities - will refer, on the one hand, to the *Aryan-Roman* element, and on the other, to the *Nordic-Aryan* element, elements which must in turn be understood as offshoots of a single trunk.

We have explained the meaning and specific content of these two terms elsewhere. For the time being, we shall confine ourselves to pointing out that any use of expressions, once in vogue, such as "Latin peoples", "Latin brotherhood", etc., seems to us to be to be avoided in future. These are suspect expressions which, if they have any meaning at all, are reduced to a veneer covering an ethnic substance that is quite heterogeneous but, above all, infected and denatured by processes of spiritual and political degeneration. The force of origins, the formative force of a civilization worthy of the name, is not "Latin" but quite simply "Latin".

ehe is simply "Roman", - *Aryan-Roman* - just as, among the peoples of the North, ehe is simply *Nordic-Aryan*, at least as regards those aspects of civilization which alone can interest us and which alone we can recognize as the foundations on which to found a European reconstruction and a new order.

With this in mind, we need to examine the latent potential of European peoples to move towards one or other of the two poles alluded to above. But how can we fail to see that we are currently in the middle of a trajectory, that we are facing a "trial by fire" (whether in terms of vocations or the stability of the various national groupings), a trial that has only just begun? Fate would seem to have it that European renewal is not the result of internal action, but of fractures caused by the force of arms and things, through upheavals, and that only the future will tell us whether deeper forces have replaced those on the surface, and what the nature of these forces is, case by case.

A positive outcome will emerge if, somehow, these forces manage to retain something of the formative energies that once gave birth to the medieval community of "Aryan" and "Christian" nations. This applies to all modern Western nations, whether directly involved in war or not yet. The nations of Europe with a predominantly Slavic component, and under the sign of the Orthodox religion, are no exception. The Romanian legionarism of Codreanu, one of the most interesting ideologies in Europe, shows us the possibility of going beyond certain barriers that some consider insurmountable: in this ideology, reference to the ecumenical conception of the Orthodox Church gives rise to an organic ideal of national life, as a unity of race and faith, of the living, the dead and the law of God.

an ideal which, in certain respects and from the same direction, goes beyond what the Axis ideologies have not yet achieved, due to contingent circumstances (ideologies considered, of course, in their spiritual, not political, aspect³).

Thus, with the exception of Romania, now neck-and-neck with us, the Slavic and Orthodox nations themselves could be organically incorporated into the Axis imperial spaces, provided they returned to their own traditions. In such a return to their roots, they could easily recognize the illusory nature of the "Slavic" disguise of certain Bolshevik endeavors, and identify (in a very different direction) the true center of gravity of their highest aspirations, as well as the space in which their possibilities could blossom, in a given and harmonious way, in the perspective and with the guarantee of a superior civilization, capable of understanding and respecting them.

³ Readers wishing to know more about Evola's analysis of C. Z. Codreanu's movement may refer to three of his articles in the little book *Codreanu e la Guardia di Ferro*, by C. Sburlati, Volpe, Rome, 1977, pp. 71-87, as well as Evola's interview with Codreanu reUsed on March 22, 1938 and reproduced in *Bollettino del Centro Studi Evoliani*, VII, 17 (April 1976), pp. 1-4 [Note by R.D.P.] - [Tr. fr. in *Totalité*, 18-19, Summer 1984, pp. 198-203 - N.D.T.].

VII

1941

FOR A GENUINE EUROPEAN LAW

At the present time, it is of the utmost importance to bring to a successful conclusion the warlike enterprise in which we are engaged, and to clarify the ideas which are to form the basis of the new order which will take shape after the victory of the Axis powers. But in such a situation, it is also extremely important to examine, with the utmost attention, everything that is already being worked out in the legal field with a view to revising the conceptions hitherto accepted by the peoples of Europe, and to clarify what prospects lie ahead.

In this respect, we thought it worthwhile to report and comment briefly on the ideas expressed by Carl Schmitt, a jurist well known to readers of our journal, in a recent essay published in the periodical *Deutsche Rechtswissenschaft*, and devoted to the processes that led to the disappearance of the European legal order and the constitution of what has been called *Vinternational law*.

We know that, according to Schmitt - and this is a view we unreservedly share - the norms that once governed relations between nations in practice were organic and differentiated in character, until a relatively recent period that has already been forgotten by the modern world with unprecedented rapidity.

nant. There was no such thing as abstract, impersonal, universalist law. In fact, in earlier times, the history of law was identified with the history of empires, already offering us the idea of "great spaces" as spheres of influence that were neither simply national nor domains organized on the basis of common interests - an idea that only today, by the very force of things, is beginning to haunt people's minds again. However, even at the end of the properly imperial era of our continent's history, Schmitt notes the presence of a law that was not "international" at all, but belonged to the "law of the European nations".

As he rightly points out, until relatively recently, to speak of law meant the same thing as to speak of "European law" *sic et simpliciter*, and this expression profoundly supported the unity of the civilization of the European peoples. This situation lasted until the end of the 19th century. From 1890 onwards, a new era began, bringing with it profound transformations and consequences whose deleterious nature was to become increasingly apparent, right up to the crisis that gave rise to the present conflict.

Schmitt fixes the start of this new era in 1890, when Bismarck stepped down as Chancellor, for it seems that Bismarck was the man who, at the Congress of Berlin in 1878 and subsequently at the Congo Conference in 1885, emerged as "the last statesman firmly attached to a law of nations still specifically European and applied by the great European powers". On this point, we do not entirely agree with Schmitt - who reminds us that, precisely at the Congress of Berlin (albeit with certain reservations), Turkey was annexed to the European legal community, a novelty of symptomatic significance, all the more so as this took place under the pressure of very realistic motivations of political expediency, which thus proved stronger than any other higher-order consideration and began

the prestige of a major European power at the time, Imperial Russia. Nor should we forget that this admission was agreed with the English Jew Disraeli, which can only give rise to a feeling of unease insofar as the two politicians got on perfectly well in Berlin, as evidenced by Bismarck's historic phrase about Disraeli: "*Der alte Jude, dies ist der Mann*", i.e. "This old Jew is the right man for the job". We mention all this to make it clear that, contrary to what many believe, Bismarck's policies in Germany and Europe were not all "in order": anyone who takes the trouble to leaf through a very interesting and revealing book on the backstage of European history, which we recently translated¹, could easily be convinced of this. More than Bismarck, it seems to us that it is Metternich who best deserves the appellation of "last European", i.e. the last politician who felt the need for concrete solidarity between European nations, guided not only by realist political reasons and material interests but, on the contrary, by ideas and a desire to maintain Europe's traditional heritage at its best.

But let's close this parenthesis. In any case, we can agree with Schmitt when he points out that it was in the last decade of the nineteenth century that the conception of law underwent profound and decisive transformations. It might be worth looking at the internal reasons for such a change: in a nutshell, we have the impression that it would not have been possible if law had not already been "materialized" and secularized in Europe - if, in other words, it had not been possible for law to be "materialized" and secularized in Europe.

¹ Cf. E. Malynski and L. de Poncins, *La Guerra occulta*, Hoepli, Milan, 1939. [Tr. it., by Evola himself, of *La guerre occulte*, Beauchesne, Paris, 1936 - N.D.T.].

When it came to regulating relations between the peoples of Europe, considerations of a more than purely political, military and economic nature were still very much to the fore. Indeed, we should have no illusions about the famous "European civilization" which, at a time when law was not yet universalist and generalized, "legitimized", so to speak, this same law vis-à-vis the states and peoples of other continents. In reality, this was nothing more than a myth, in which the ideology of the Enlightenment and "progressivism" of more or less Masonic obedience played a significant role. This civilization, extolled as a privilege of the white races and contrasted with the peoples of other continents - and not only with "savages" and truly "inferior" races - was defined much more by technical and social conquests, scientism and rationalism than by truly traditional European values. Already, at the Congress of Vienna, the religious basis for a European understanding based on a common civilization had proved highly uncertain. In Berlin, in 1878, it was left aside altogether, and from then on, "politics" was the order of the day. If, as Schmitt points out, we still had European law, this was due to the automatic survival of a certain state of affairs: there were indeed concrete, largely dynastic and traditional relations between the great European powers, but their original suprapolitical premises had disappeared. As long as this survival retained a breath of life, there was still European law; but once a certain limit had been crossed, it was inevitable that disintegration would occur, for, on the one hand, all contact with any higher point of view was now broken and, on the other, the "new ideas" were spreading throughout the European states, along with the rationalist, democratic and anti-traditional conception of civilization that flowed from them.

And that's how we quickly arrived at the elaboration of the

This is a new and paradoxical type of law - one that only yesterday claimed to be the law par excellence, the true basis for the moral organization of peoples. In Schmitt's words, it is "the extension of the law of the European peoples, of the *public law of Europe**, to a general, cosmopolitan and international law, encompassing all peoples, all races and all continents. What a few European nations had developed in the ^{eighteenth} and nineteenth centuries, on the basis of the close kinship of representatives of the same European family, in the form of a certain concrete order, became at a moment's notice a world law, which should have applied indiscriminately to fifty or sixty heterogeneous states. It's a strange process. As is the speed with which this generalization was achieved around 1890, through a series of accomplished facts. But stranger still is the irresponsible attitude that the science of the law of nations adopted in the face of such a process, to the point of ending up in abstract universalism - as if this had not been an essential and fundamental mutation, but merely a process of quantitative extension".

We won't follow Schmitt here in his enumeration of the most characteristic stages of this process. Instead, we simply recall the essential role played by Anglo-Saxon ideology, both English and American. It is precisely from these jurists that the expression "*international law*" comes to designate the new law.

In older works, the term "international law" was used. Even today, in many branches of our teaching, this term is still commonplace, whereas the corresponding German expression is *Völkerrecht* literally translated as "law of peoples" and "law of nations", a term which does not necessarily evoke in the mind the premises of "international law".

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

This law, Schmitt observed, no longer referred to any "system" of states. This law, Schmitt observes, no longer referred to any "system" of states; rather, its premise was a disordered collection of heterogeneous political units, deprived of spatial and ethnic relations, and credited with an identical type of sovereignty: in fact, a veritable atomization that would have had to be held in place by a mechanism of abstract "norms", rules based on more or less recognized jurisprudence.

Parallel to this transformation, a double dualism is emerging. First, according to Schmitt, there is the dualism between the law in force in a given state and the law applicable to state-to-state relations: a new symptom of the inorganicity of the new era. In this respect, Schmitt's analysis deserves a separate technical commentary. Schmitt considers the so-called *Staatsbezogenheit* to be one of the main causes of the dualism in question: by this formula, we roughly mean state centralism implemented by means of a vigorous "positivization" of law. And the more "positive" the law of a state becomes, and the more it is defined by a rigid corpus of laws rigorously and exactly applicable on the basis of pure state authority, the further the sphere of this internal law moves away from the general principles of "international" law.

At the same time, however, a second dualism comes into play: that between the properly political and the juridical. Such a dualism, or at least such a dichotomy - as Schmitt notes - in itself is nothing new; but in the present era, it has become the essential foundation of the new law of nations. "Its ideal structure was no longer determined by the idea of certain fundamental rights of peoples and states, nor by the more or less tautological principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, but precisely by the exclusion of all that is politic or political.

than by a science which, like law, is on the contrary specifically political".

And so a whole host of treaty-makers set out to guarantee the "purity", or "neutrality", of the law of nations in terms of normative formalism. So far, however, these efforts have met with an unfortunate fate. No one - Schmitt rightly notes - has been able to rigorously define these two new and quite distinct entities: the "political" and the "juridical". Those who have tried to get to the bottom of things have inevitably ended up with a vague decisionism. And so we are told that to decide - whatever the political element and whenever it asserts itself - there is nothing other than the *will of* each State concerned. And if we turn to the problem of war, we arrive at the same result: when armed military action (reprisals, blockades, etc.) ceases to be a state of peace and gives rise to war, this is decided only by the will, by *Vanimus belligerandi*, of each state concerned. Similarly, we have seen authors adopt the same irrationalist criterion when it comes to recognizing the label of "subject of international law": what determines such a quality - they say - is ultimately the "will" of that same international law.

In so doing, we witness a curious reversal of the situation: in order to ensure the "purity" of an abstract, formalist law, we are forced to make a profession of faith that is... irrationalist! Perhaps Schmitt could have given greater prominence to this point, by associating it with what he himself, in other works, had occasion to say about what was actually behind the "neutral" façade of *Vinternational law*. It is now well known that, far from being "neutral", "international law" had become the docile instrument of a policy controlled by the democracies and, above all, by England and France. That's why Schmitt is not quite right when, leaving the purely scientific sphere, he says that institutionalized law lacked the fundamental

It was precisely an attribute, "imperialist" in its own way, of the Atlantic powers - the figureheads of European democracy. What's more, it's clear that this same state of affairs determined the 1914-1918 war and the ensuing system of peace treaties. And the so-called "positive" law posited as a norm not only contained a political element, but this element came to be seen as a specific conception of true "civilization" - to be triumphed over with arms in hand, and consolidated through the international law of Geneva, by exalting the "conquests" of the French Revolution and wiping out the remnants of the "obscurantist" and "reactionary" world of the Central Empires.

While remaining on strictly legal ground, Schmitt nonetheless develops, in his interesting essay, various considerations demonstrating that the most recent attempts to codify normativism in international law have themselves highlighted the need for a multitude of concrete legislations and positive conjunctures, which had to be presupposed at every step and which eluded universalist generalizations. In one way or another, we have the distinct impression that the era of *Vinternational law* is now over, and that the premises for a new stage in the evolution of the law of nations need to be firmly established. All the more so as, with the definitive collapse of our adversaries, will come the equally definitive liquidation of legal forms whose internal contradictions and fateful nature are now obvious to all.

Referring to the split between the political and legal elements, Schmitt observes that when a state is powerfully organized, it can even tolerate it and turn it to its own advantage, since its authority and the power vested in the executive are sufficient to prevent any dangerous backlash; moreover, in "positivism

of the law specific to a given state, "depoliticization" cannot go beyond a certain threshold. At international level, however, the same cannot be said, and the above-mentioned split has very different consequences. We cannot, in fact, allow the "internationalist" premise to persist, that of a right that would govern the relations of all the peoples of the world, and, at the same time, desire a concrete organization of States, however approximate it may be. Certain conditions seem to us indispensable: either an articulation, or the establishment of a political authority that is the guarantor of the law - at the international level, as well as within a given state.

But, by the same token, it's easy to come back to the theory of "great spaces" and "imperial conglomerates", which has been developed insistently in these columns, and which can now be seen as decisive in the context of a new European order, whether in terms of its legal, cultural or economic aspects². And, in a new system articulated in this way, we could give concrete expression to another requirement for coherence in order to overcome the other dualism pointed out by Schmitt, namely the dualism between the form of a state's internal law and the form of the law which should, conversely, define and regulate relations between the various states. Recent years have clearly demonstrated the absurdities to which such a dualism was bound to give rise - absurdities which the formalist and positivist fiction of international law (in fact, today's Geneva law) has failed to conceal. These were norms whose democratic-egalitarian premises were self-evident to all, and which claimed to apply equally to states that had

² Cf. C. Costamagna, *GH aggregati imperiali*, in *Lo Stato*, X, 10 (October 1939); C. Costamagna, *Il "patto d'acciaio" e il nuovo diritto internazionale*, in *Lo Stato*, XI, 5 (May 1940); C. Schmitt, *Il concetto imperiale di spazio*, in *Lo Stato*, XI, 7 (July 1940) - [Note by R.D.P.].

adopted the premises in question to the use of the law in force at home, than for fascist-type states which denied them outright and had been constituted on the basis of quite different ideas.

In the new Europe, we must strive to ensure that such inconsistency gradually disappears, and even that, in this field, we arrive at truly organic forms, principles which, valid on a given level, continue to be valid on other levels, whatever the form chosen. With regard to the rights of the peoples united in the "space" of the Axis forces, it is clear that this principle can only be that of *hierarchy*. Just as within a particular state or political unit there will be a hierarchical gradation of functions (and not a mass of "individuals" governed by arbitrary norms), so too we will find, at the very basis of the law specific to the system within our "space", the idea of diversity, relative independence, gradation and hierarchization.

VIII

1941

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FUTURE ORDER OF NATIONS

Hans K. E. L. Keller is known in various European circles for having created, a few years ago, a kind of association entitled *L'Internationale des nationalistes*, which received the adhesion of a certain number of personalities of various countries and developed its activity in several directions: congresses in capitals like Berlin, London and Oslo, edition of books and opuscles, conferences, debates, etc. Keller himself wrote a certain number of works of a mainly legal character. Keller himself has written a number of works, mainly of a legal nature. The latest, just published, is entitled *Le Regnum des nations (Das Reich der Völker)*, Standard Verlag, Berlin, 1941). This is the book we wish to discuss, as it deals with issues of vital importance for the future of Europe. We will therefore summarize Keller's fundamental ideas, and then indicate the express reservations which, from our point of view, it seems necessary to make.

Keller's basic idea is the opposition between *Völkerrecht* and *Recht der Völker* - expressions which, from a literal point of view, are synonymous, but which, in Keller's use of them, express: the first, "international law" of a positive, normative type, referring essentially to the "law of the nations", the "law of the nations", the "*law of the nations*", the "*law of the*

state-to-state relations; the second, "law between peoples" as such. The former would be the proper form of the legal order that has prevailed until now; the latter, on the other hand, would be the central idea of a future order which, according to Keller, must be conceived as a "*Regnum* of nations". To be precise, the expression is "*Reich* of Nations". Rejecting the French translation "*Empire des peuples*"* (*Empire of the peoples*)*, Keller himself proposed the Romance translation "*ordre des nations*", *ordo nationum* (p. 105).

We believe, however, that the expression *Regnum*, as used in Christian literature itself, is more appropriate: we'll see why below.

The opposition mentioned earlier is based on another opposition: that between the State and the "nation-people" (*Volk*). Adopting certain tendentious interpretations typical of a somewhat superficial New German Law, Keller exacerbates the latter opposition. In itself, the state has nothing to do with the *Volk*, the people. Compared to the people, the state is not the essential but the accessory, and whenever it prevails, it is to give rise to something deleterious and contrary to the norm. The foundation of the state would be a normativo-authoritarian system based on pure "power" - a system that usurps the name of law and claims to provide the premises for a true "order". Keller gives such a system the name *etatism*, a word coined from the word state**, and conceives the possibility of it extending beyond a given society and encompassing various peoples, if not by violence, then at least without any real recognition on their part, giving rise to the phenomenon of "imperialism". And, in both cases - whether in the simple *establishment of a state* or in the

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

** In French in the text [N.D.T.].

tism than in "imperialism" - he sees the very antithesis of the idea of "the people", the anti-people and, above all, the anti-*Äëich*. Through *Reich*, Keller conceives, somewhat abusively, an order and a right that do not derive from an authority placed above them, but come from the nation itself, a nation understood as a "natural" reality, with very precise traits and its own immanent law. To "de-statize" nations would be the goal of the new age, and the constitution of the *Volk*, the people-nation, as the sole positive source of law would be the foundation of a new order, both national and international.

From the national point of view, the overcoming of *Vétatisme*, if it did indeed mean the elimination of the State, would imply the reversal of a hierarchical relationship: it is not the nation that should belong to the State, but the State to the nation (p. 104), as a mere organ or instrument of the latter, as the form in which the nation organizes its power, with a single end in view: to protect the "people", its right and its absolute sovereignty (p. 132). For the sole sovereign must remain the *Volk*, the people-nation (p. 65). From this stems the idea of a "total people" (*totales Volk*), as opposed to a "total state", and the wish to see the process of forming such "national-people totalities" (*Volksganzheiten*) strengthened throughout the world over the years.

Only "total peoples" will be the subjects of the new international legal system prophesied by Keller. In his view, the more natural national feeling develops, the more all aspirations to power and imperialism disappear, giving way to a feeling of respect for other nations, and thus to the possibility of natural relations of coordination and direction of a higher order (pp. 48-49). Respect for every people, whatever they may be, and the clear, active will that every people be respected, will therefore be the cornerstone of the new law within the "*Regnum* of Nations". This law will not be above peoples, but at their service (p. 48).

and to intervene against any interference by anti-national or international powers (as would have been the case, for example, with the intervention of volunteers against Bolshevism in Spain), or against any interference that might be harmful to the very idea of nationhood (Judaism, Masonry). In the law of nations, the "aggressor" would be defined on the basis of an attack not on territory, but on the essence of a nation (p. 239-240).

From an institutional point of view, Keller seems to favor a "*Regnum* of Nations" with two parliaments: a parliament of the nations themselves, and a parliament of the states - i.e., according to the aforementioned concept, of their executives. This parliament of states would deal only with the technical and practical aspects of the problems examined and resolved by the parliament of nations. Since the real subjects of the new law and the fundamental pillars of the new order would be the peoples who have truly achieved "wholeness", Keller envisages the possibility of their executive bodies looking after other peoples still "in the making", who would therefore come under the same state as the first, not in order to lose their national character, but, on the contrary, to be protected and helped to realize their full potential as nations.

While the right to be respected is equal for every true people, not all peoples have the same right to assume a leadership function superior to the merely national one (p. 190), admitted by Keller as the concrete foundation of the *Regnum* in question within the new order. The new order, however, would not be based on *Vlmpe-rium*, but would have to emerge from the "gravitational" relationships of certain peoples to other peoples - relationships dependent on a set of factors that are difficult to define in terms of abstract law, such as, for example, those of a racial and geopolitical nature (p. 21). Keller writes (p. 190): "The leadership of peoples belongs to a world

This is an organic-ethical ideal, not a mathematical-quantitative one, as in the case of the equality of states. The models are to be found in nature, for example, in the order governing the sun and the planets, which is not based on a desire for domination but on mutual attraction, determined by relationships of mass and equilibrium". We return to the idea, underlined with insistence, that the *Reich* must be conceived as an exclusively "natural" order (p. 66), whose relationships are determined by the essence and "eternal laws of the life of peoples" (pp. 65-70). Although "dynamic", a "natural law" serves as the foundation of the "*Regnum* of nations" (p. 243). And if, from a legal point of view, doubts remain as to which influence a given people should obey, in order to organize itself within the general system, Keller believes that the solution must be indicated exclusively to that people "by an inner voice that will nag them until they obey it" (p. 21, 22).

Nevertheless, we must look for the foundations of this "community determined by nature" - *naturgegebene Gemeinschaft*. Where there is a common race, we can refer to a sense of common origin. Or we can refer to a "community of destiny" and, better still, to the common will to shape the future (p. 43, 91-93). In the case of the German Reich, Keller considers the following elements: peoples with a spiritual life similarly oriented in a "Germanic" direction; peoples with a common historical and geopolitical destiny (Poles and Czechs); peoples encompassed in the same Germanic-European economy of large spaces, or, if one prefers, vital spaces (peoples of Eastern Europe) (p. 67).

In Keller's conception, however, any precise definition gradually disappears. For him, the *Regnum* would be open to all peoples (p. 65), the "community of destiny" would today encompass all nations (p. 43), and the logic of this ideology would thus lead to a single *Völker-Reich*, a *Regnum* embracing all the nations of the world.

the nations of the world and attentive to the interests of each of them (p. 22-23). In this light, any concrete, differentiated criteria for determining affinity and the right to supranational leadership naturally fall by the wayside. Keller bases this right on a difference in "rank". Analyzing the various ideas on which such a difference could be based, and noting the inconsistency or inadequacy of many of them, Keller is forced to define this "rank" on the basis of pacifist criteria: on the sense of responsibility that each people, in relation to its own mission, feels towards peace and its maintenance, respecting and safeguarding the right of every other people (p. 151, 197-206). Any tendency to "denationalize" would be indicative of a negative disposition in a people aspiring to this eminent leadership function (p. 206). This function is not an end in itself, but must be placed at the service of each nation. Unlike the Roman idea (?), it is not simply a matter of showing consideration for subjugated peoples (*parcere subjectis*), but of placing power at their disposal (p. 217). Given that Keller's *Fordo nationum* or *Regnum* des peuples does not, in fact, involve any form of "positivization" and stabilization of a right resulting from the natural equilibrium of peoples ; given, moreover, that these relationships of equilibrium are contingent in nature, since there are many peoples "in the making", Keller is forced to admit the possibility and necessity of war, on the one hand, and to recognize, on the other, that those who are today's transgressors of the law may appear tomorrow as those who formulate and defend the law. Having accepted this, the only criterion for judging whether a war between nations is just will be its capacity to advance towards the *Regnum* or *Reich* of nations (p. 235), where *jus belli* would cease to be a matter of state sovereignty. "The men who make history in the name of their peoples are beyond their States - it is the right of peoples, of nations, that they have in view" (p. 86). As for

Frank, for Keller too, "peoples are divine creations and, as such, stand above those human creations that are states" (p. 31). The conceptual limit, however, is a universalist one, as an order encompassing all the peoples of the world.

Keller considers the *Reich* or *ordo nationum*, understood in this way, to be a specifically Germanic idea. From the earliest times, Germans would have seen the State as the adversary of the nation-people (p. 15, 138). Moreover, the author makes no secret of his aversion to the Roman conception of the Empire, which, in his view, is reduced to imperialism, to a pure fact of "power". Only racially non-unitary peoples would have needed this "heteronomous" imperial order, and this would have been the case for the heterogeneous peoples of the Mediterranean (p. 56). Equally "imperialist" would have been the medieval order, above all influenced by the Roman-Christian idea (p. 54), and only the spread of this idea among the Germanic peoples would explain the emergence, among them, of "imperialist" tendencies (p. 57). Keller goes so far as to criticize the Prussian conception of the state, which he sees as having little of the hypothetical German heritage associated with the myth of the *Volk*, and much more of the idea - albeit secularized - of Benedictine "order" and "service" (pp. 136-137). He goes on to quote Montesquieu's nonsensical formula: "The Romans dispossessed other peoples of their nationality and even led them to ruin", asserting on the other hand that "the German national idea is absolutely reconcilable with the idea of a universal order" (p. 61). Finally, here's Keller's assessment of the Fascist idea: "Fascism, which, according to a widespread opinion in Italy, has already gone beyond narrow nationalism, is the representative of a conception hostile to German National Socialism: that of egalitarian universalism or, in other words, imperialism" (p. 157).

According to Keller, the *Regnum* of nations would be alien to any transcendent idea, any justification based on a supranatural order or religious confession.

This order - we repeat - must be a purely "natural" order. The author also denies that the source of the earthly rights of peoples must be related to a non-earthly order - to the point of believing that the "Kingdom of God" is a purely imaginary projection of the idea of a temporal *Regnum* (pp. 52-53). Like the one in use in Rome, any denominationally-based theory of the *Reich*, or *Regnum*, would be deprived of two fundamental requisites: universality and organicity. Indeed, on the one hand, such a religious denomination could divide and set one part of the same people against another; on the other, it would unify races and peoples of the same denomination in a formless way, since all would be equal before God and since the common denominator of this faith would have primacy over specific national quality (p. 53).

These are Keller's key ideas as priorities for the future order he calls for. Among them, a number of legitimate demands mingle with intellectual distortions and suggestions that originate in the confused ideology of certain German extremist circles. We could indicate our reservations as follows.

In primis et ante omnia, we cannot subscribe to the mythology of the *Volk* - the "people-nation" - so dear to Keller, who makes it the cornerstone of his entire legal edifice. Mussolini once spoke ironically of the "mysterious entity that calls itself a people". Like *Volk*, "people" is simply a myth, always and inevitably demagogic: especially when it is accompanied by polemical language designed to devalue and belittle the significance of everything that is the state, the formative political force from above. Keller remains locked in the most ingenuously optimistic jusnaturalism: he truly believes that peoples exist as very specific entities, endowed with their own consciousness and will, determined by superior "eternal laws".

We're not just talking about nationalities, but also about the political forms they take, and the specific values they embody. Such things can only be said to the naive - especially today, when the natural feeling of nationality (quite different from "nationalism" and devoid of any "political" connotations) has become extremely vulnerable in the face of the massification of peoples and the advent of a civilization based on values that no longer have anything traditional about them. Hegel said - as Keller reminds us (p. 191): "The people is that part of the state which does not know what it wants". This is true. Our conviction is that the people, the nation, exist only as the state, in the state and, to a certain extent, thanks to the state.

But our state is not that of Keller's artificial antithesis: it is not a legal superstructure, a pure fact of "power", an external authority without foundation. It is ethical and spiritual. It has the value of an *entelechy*, that is, a force giving form to the nation and the "people", who would otherwise remain a scattered, formless reality, vegetating on a naturalistic plane of existence, devoid of any metaphysical, ethical or even truly heroic tension.

Our point of view is at equal distance from both the *jusnaturaliste* and collectivizing idea of "the people" and the abstract, juridical and rationalist idea of the State. We are realists. If we don't believe in "the people", we do believe in the elites who shape, lead and eventually dominate them. Keller sees only the state as *caput mortuum*, i.e., as it has become in some cases, when political structures founded by leaders and elites embodying living traditions "depersonalized", "objectified", created an *alibi* to justify themselves - namely, autonomous public powers and "neutral" legal forms or norms, in order thereby to gain that recognition to which direct affirmation and charisma emanating from real leaders and principles - is the only way to achieve.

were no longer enough. In order to achieve the same goal - i.e., to remain in place without exposing oneself - but along different axes, a myth was created that was seemingly opposed to that of the neutral "state", but which in reality served the same purpose: the myth of the "people". Keller admits the idea of the *Volk* was "discovered" in 1933 (p. 31). Even if, in our opinion, the date is not so recent, since it has undeniable precedents, particularly in French democratic nationalism and Jacobinism (in fact, it was precisely in France, as a reaction against an excess of statism stemming from the centralizing, absolutist and anti-aristocratic action led by the Kings of France since Philip IV the Fair¹, the mystique of the nation* was born, of the people as the source of all rights, incapable of supporting any authority from above) - even if, as we said, the *Volk* was not really discovered in 1933, the fact remains that the "mythology" that refers to it is new, that it was ignored by previous civilizations, and that it came into being for very specific political and propaganda reasons: "People" and "*Volk*", far from being notions with real content today, are two ideas-force, two myths seized upon by a power in order to consolidate a given political system, prompted by circumstances, in order to capture and organize the forces - themselves disoriented and ready to obey the most diverse suggestions - of the real "people", and, consequently, to consolidate a certain type of political authority. As socialist tendencies were less strong in Italy, we didn't need to resort to this myth, in fact: the spiritual idea of the State united with direct authority stemming from a *Duce* and

¹ On the subversive role played by Philip the Fair in 15th-century France, cf. J. Evola, *Il caso di Filippo il Bello*, in *Arthos*, V, 11 (Janvier-avril 1976) p. 1-9, with a note by Giovanni Conti (p. 9-11) [Note by R.D.P.] - [Tr. fr. *Le cas de Philippe le Bel*, in *Totalité*, 3, Winter 1977, p. 33-41 - N.D.T.].

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

of a Monarch were enough to lead us to the same result.

Keller says that the whole difference between "state" law and law based on the idea of the *Volk* lies in the judgment we make about human nature: in the first case, as in any conception of the *Reich* or *Vlmporium* of Roman-Christian origin, pessimism prevails: we don't trust human nature - whereas in the second case, we do (p. 80). But what does this "human nature" consist of? We are not pessimists, but realists. We believe in human nature, but not in just anyone, and even less in the human nature of the community as a whole, because we know its psychology too well. On the other hand, we believe in the human nature of the minorities who create states, who give a soul to peoples, who guide communities to heights they would never have reached on their own.

Not statism, therefore, nor ingenuously optimistic jusnaturalism, but the aristocratic-hierarchical idea, without those disguises that only demagogues and spineless people are fond of. For us, this means Roman and Aryan realism. To Romance peoples," writes Keller (p. 103), "the only thing that matters is the state, even if they make incidental appeals to nationalist motivations.

Our reference point is the Mussolini idea that the people is something elusive and blind until it constitutes, with the birth of the state, a unitary reality and will, intimately imbued with higher-order meanings. But this does not make us "statists", because we do not make an idol of the State - as Keller and certain German jurists do of *the Volk*. Because for us, let's repeat, there is someone behind the State: there are Rulers, Monarchs - and, if you like, an "eminent race" among them.

in which only "nation", "people", "race", "tradition" cease to be abstractions. In any great "people", there are always diverse influences, ethnicities and traditions. It's up to the elites to choose and emphasize a given element from among them, and to subordinate all the others to it - thus bringing back to a precise order what would otherwise have remained hybrid and frozen under the species of confused potentiality.

Keller believes in immanent laws among peoples, provided by "nature", respected and followed in themselves, not proceeding from any power from above or that can be personified, and, in any case, having nothing to do with an "afterlife" (pp. 46 and 52-53). This is a "belief" like any other. In fact, it would be hard to cite a single piece of legislation from ancient peoples, including the Aryans, where the authority of the law did not refer to an origin from above, "divine", and which was not considered to have been introduced by legislators who were also "divine". But we already know Keller's point of view: instead of recognizing, in the order inherent in an earthly and temporal *Imperium*, the reflection of a transcendent order and, moreover, the secularization of a law and authority originally purely spiritual, Keller tends to see in any idea of a solely spiritual *Regnum* a kind of chimerical projection of the utopian image of an earthly kingdom (p. 53). For the most part, he remains at the level of evhemism.

Keller also finds it extremely difficult to define the concept of *Volk*. In some cases, it would appear that he adopts the National Socialist conception of Volk, which corresponds to the formula *Volksgemeinschaft*, as his criterion and unit of measurement. Thus, on page 48, he states that the "community of nations", the supranational *Vordo* to which he aspires, cannot be realized until all peoples have organized themselves in accordance with the Nazi totalitarian and social concept, expressed precisely in the formula mentioned above (cf. p. 69). Elsewhere, however, he concedes that "it is irrelevant to consider the

the way in which particular peoples conceive of themselves: the essential thing is that each should leave the other free to form this or that conception of his own existence and to live in conformity with it" (p. 115). This is the conclusion of his analysis of the various theories of the "people" (pp. 113-115), a conclusion that naturally leads to total indifferentism and a derisory standard of reciprocal tolerance on the international stage. The fact that Keller acknowledges the inadequacy of race to define the people; that he introduces the vague concept of "community of destiny" (a grandeur that can be defined in several directions, and there is more than one in the history of a great people); that, finally, he speaks of "peoples in the making" without being able to say according to what the *terminus ad quem*, i.e. the definitive form of such a becoming, will be defined - all this confirms the mythical and vague character of his conception of the *Volk*. The only coherent solution would be to assert dogmatically that nations as such do not really exist until they are "total nations", according to the National Socialist formula of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. However, to make such a political form a condition for full membership of *Vordo natio- num* is clearly to empty the principle of respect due to all peoples of its substance, to the point of deeming them not yet "of age" and placing them under virtual tutelage (p. 121, 123), possibly under that of a foreign state, until such time as they have managed to give themselves this form.

But that's not all. As we've seen, Keller denounces the inorganicity and levelling that would be inherent in any Roman or religious conception of the *Regnum* or, if you like, the *Reich* of nations. But such a grievance is precisely turned against his own conception, whose logic, in fact, places no obstacle in the way of the utopian vision of an order that would embrace *all the* nations of the world. And if nothing stands in the way, it's precisely because such an order is even more abstract...

and empty of all content than that of the defunct "League of Nations" itself. In such a framework, it would simply concern itself with the rights of each people, protecting them, maintaining peace and equilibrium - in short, it would be a kind of purely administrative function, presupposing no specific worldview, no higher point of reference. But all this, in turn, stems from the particularist, relativist and collectivist conception of the *Volk*. If one does not recognize the authority of higher-order values, it is quite clear that between the various "national" units there can only ever be extrinsic relationships, "gravitations" and "equilibriums" that basically imply nothing essential. In any case, for us, such an *ordo nationum* as a universal order is absurd and unacceptable: our conception is that of concrete, differentiated supranational units, centred on a specific worldview and values that "set the tone", and from which the internal cohesion of a given "imperial space" proceeds. The superior civilization of a race destined to dominate must serve as a point of reference for a set of minor politico-ethnic units, enabling them to go beyond their merely national values and, by integrating them, to find within themselves the principle that will make them understand each other and feel united: truly united, and not by adopting the style, made up of tolerant indifference, of the members of some club.

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This is why these supranational units, which will put an end to the era of particularistic, schismatic and anti-European nationalism, will not only be differentiated: they may also be of a military nature. As we have seen, Keller admits war, but without recognizing any specific value in it: just as he admits, at the very least,

the state as a transitional phase, as an instrument and pedagogue capable of helping "the people" to finally realize themselves in a "total" form (p. 71). But the general tone of his discourse remains pacifist (p. 83). Whenever Keller uses the word "power", *Macht*, it evokes for him only oppression, vexation, violence, the denaturing of peoples. He has forgotten Moltke's famous phrase: "Universal peace is only a dream - and not even a beautiful dream". Now, insofar as, for Keller, each people's inclinations should be respected, we can assume that there are warrior peoples by race and vocation - no one being unaware of what others have said, starting with Klemm and D'Eichtal, about the typology distinguishing between "passive races" and "active races", "servile races" and "dominating races", and so on. It is true that Keller refers to the results of research carried out on wild tribes, in particular those demonstrating natural inclinations to mutual respect and peace (p. 45 ff.), in order to challenge the idea that the natural state is war of all against all. But this thesis would require a great deal more documentation to be relevant; against it, the whole of the great Aryan story already stands in contradiction: a story not of perpetual war, nor of war for its own sake, of course, but a story that features virile, domineering human types, capable of realizing, through struggle, superior values - often superior to anything that can proceed from a climate of naturalistic peace and harmony. Among the rights that Keller recognizes for peoples (pp. 171-184) is the right to "specific development": but why should this development be confined to the "bourgeois" realm of "culture and economy", to the exclusion of anything that refers to the "power" factor, when the natural inclination of a given people is, precisely, of the warrior and heroic type? For our part, we consider heroic and warlike elements to be of particular importance.

importance, as the foundations of an "imperial space", i.e. a concrete, well-articulated order within a given set of nations².

Since we must now come to a conclusion, we feel that Keller's ideas are acceptable only as a polemic against abstract normativism in international law - which is, moreover, in the process of being definitively liquidated - and against the "neutral", depersonalized forms, devoid of any qualitative basis or real force, that the idea of the State has taken on here and there in the modern world. The positive points of reference that Keller invokes against this state of affairs are, however, highly problematic and unacceptable from the point of view of a tradition that we readily declare to be Roman - not without adding that, in its Romanity, it is at one with the traditions of the great civilizations of the past, of which those of the old Aryan world are the most important. In fact, as we have said, this mythologizing of the *Volk*, of the "people-nation" as the source of all authority, is nothing more than a modern invention, recently born in Germany, and which now appears to be practically obsolete, even in Germany, by the very force of the events that are taking place in Europe. Efforts by Keller (p. 63) and others to link it to an ancient "German" tradition are just window-dressing. We have seen that, to this end, Keller found himself obliged to condemn the very tradition of the Prussian state as non-German and "Romanizing", and to extend a similar condemnation to the imperial Middle Ages. It's not impossible that he could draw on some of the conceptions of the early Germanic peoples. But this is of little interest to us, as they cannot be taken as authoritative: the "primitive" Germans are, in fact, only a few particular branches of the Germanic tradition.

²Cf. J. Evola, *Das Zeitalter des soldatischen Ethos*, in *Die Aktion*, March 1941.

We must judge them and understand their traditions on the basis of what the great Aryan civilizations of antiquity, including Rome, offer us in a much more complete, precise and documented form.

It's true that these ancient traditions contain many "myths", but their content is on a completely different level and possesses a completely different reality to that of the modern *Volk* - which, as we've already alluded to, was essentially bequeathed to dynastic and traditional Europe by French Jacobinism, and has a strongly collectivist and anti-hierarchical flavour. From our traditional point of view, "nationalities" can certainly exist, but on a "naturalistic" level, so to speak, i.e. not yet political or properly spiritual: as specific and spontaneous forms of sensitivity, as particular mores where, however, the predominant element is ultimately more the race than the "nation". On the contrary, the center and indispensable condition of the nation as a political and spiritual reality is the state. This is not a pure fact of "power", or a kind of abstract legal superstructure, but an ethical and spiritual reality as well as a formative and selective force. In turn, this force is linked either to an elite, to a race of leaders and the prestige that is theirs, or to values that are to some extent transcendent (which need not necessarily be those of the Christian religion alone: ancient Iran, ancient Rome, etc., show this) and which legitimize them, for there is no true authority except authority from above. The suggestive power of such principles, having unified a "people" and given it a soul, can be projected beyond its borders and, by various means, including that of war, lead to higher, i.e. supranational, yet perfectly defined units, ordered according to a determined law: these are "imperial spaces". The "rank" of a given nation as a supranational leader cannot be measured in terms of

In other words, it's a materialistic, administrative, pacifico-bourgeois concept, as if it were a police force ensuring collective peace and security. On the contrary, it is the adherence to the transcendent values mentioned above, and the associated ability to animate, to exalt, to elicit impetus and self-sacrifice, to communicate the strength needed to face a tragic situation or an adverse fate - all this bears the stamp of authentic superiority. The internal logic of this system does not lead us to extend it to all the nations of the world, but to limit it to specific areas as blocks of nations - blocks united by the bond of an "Order" and capable, if necessary, of heroic unanimity comparable to that of a "crusade". Leaving aside both universalist and nationalist myths, the organization of a European, Aryan and "Roman" bloc is the only concrete goal for our future, and the only object worthy of serious consideration in terms of a new law and order for peoples.

IX

1943

FUNCTION OF THE IMPERIAL IDEA AND ELIMINATION OF "NEUTRAL CULTURE"

In Italy, as in Germany, it's not easy to find idealistic and cultural positions of the same resolute and organic character as those offered by revolutionary thought in the realm of politics. And it is no less difficult to find authors capable of a global vision that is supra-ordinate to anything that comes under the heading of particularism or immediate political interest. This is why we must mention a book from Germany which, in our opinion, is one of the most important to have appeared since National Socialism came to power. The author is Christoph Steding, and the book is entitled *The Empire and the Illness of European Culture*¹. In truth, it is an unfinished work: the author died in 1938 before he could give it a definitive form, which explains the numerous repetitions and the relative vagueness of its plan. Nevertheless,

¹ C. Steding, *Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur*, Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 2^e ed., Hamburg, 1938, of which another edition has just been published.

In its present form, this book undoubtedly bears the stamp of precise, bold and uncompromising thought, expressing the most worthy tendencies of National Socialism - precisely those on the basis of which the vocations of our two nations can meet. There is a further reason why we thought it would be useful to make Steding's ideas known: a number of deviations typical of certain extremist circles are definitively overcome, while reference points are clarified that are likely, in principle, to be valid for both the Germanic and Roman traditions.

Steding's entire thinking revolves around the concept of Empire or *Reich*. For him, the Empire has always represented the pivot and soul of everything European. Indeed, in our history, the Empire has never meant a mere political institution, to be equated with any other form of state, but the principle of a higher order, the very foundation, source and substance of our continent's civilization (p. 6, 28). It was a political as well as a cultural center. However, it has to be admitted that, over the centuries, this center has become paralyzed, to the point where all that remains in its place is a vacant political space. Indeed, the last hundred and fifty years of European history have been characterized by the disappearance of the great states created and guided by races belonging to the Nordic Aryan trunk. The initial phases of this involution date back to the Thirty Years' War, followed by the French Revolution with all its consequences. For Steding, however, all this is not about cause and effect. The fundamental element remains the Empire: it was precisely because the Empire degenerated that a series of negative phenomena occurred, and not vice versa. The victories of the French and the Swedes in the 17th century, the liquidation of monarchical France, the secession of Sweden, the decline of Austria, the dismantling of Peter the Great's Russia and so on - all of these have had a negative impact on the Empire.

from then until 1918, are phenomena of consequence, resulting from the neutralization of older Europe's center of gravity, i.e. the imperial idea (p. 7, 3).

There's no other explanation for the fact that the word "Europe" has become increasingly synonymous with "Western Europe", i.e. with that demo-liberal world that came into being with the French Revolution and the definitive affirmation of the very forces that had provoked the crisis of the imperial idea. So much so, in fact, that we came to believe that things would be all the better for Europe if they were all the worse for what still remained of the imperial heritage (p. 5), to the point where we attributed the character of a kind of holy war in the name of "civilization" to everything that, in reality, had the meaning of a diabolical subversion against the traditional European idea (p. 9). At the same time, Europe's center of gravity was to shift in favor of its overseas territories, which, as colonial possessions, came to constitute the main force of the Western democratic powers (p. 7). But that's not all: a similar shift has taken place in favor of subaltern racial strata corresponding to human types that are in themselves deprived of history, neutral and apolitical, and which had hitherto only had any significance when guided and organized under the aegis of superior ethnic types. This is the true explanation for democracy, Bolshevism, Communism and similar phenomena of decadence that have confronted the Germanic peoples themselves. In fact, it's not just a question of the reappearance of exogenous racial substrates, but also of the predominance, within the latest generations, of hereditary dispositions hitherto forced to adopt a latent form under the empire of force which, in these same peoples, concealed other racial and ethnic components of a higher level (p. 9). For Steding, 1789 already represents the crisis of "Apollonian" and Aryan humanity, insofar as the irruption

of the demonic substance of the Parisian plebs went hand in hand with the reappearance of the obscure substratum of prehistoric races deprived of history (p. 8, 497). The secret of Judaism's success must be measured against this yardstick: by nature, the Jews are a "neutral" people, rootless, anhistorical, unassimilable and cosmopolitan vis-à-vis any Aryan or European politico-national organization. They thus found the way clear until, with the crisis of the idea of Empire, a similarly neutral, shapeless, anti-imperial human substance and "race" came to predominate in Europe (pp. 13, 118, 650).

In particular, Steding analyzes the forms that the process of "neutralization" has taken in Germany's neighboring countries, which have recently also turned politically towards the principle of neutrality, internationalism or separatism, as in Switzerland, Holland, the Scandinavian countries - and, Steding adds, in part of the Rhineland, as well as in Austria itself, in certain respects. In these territories on the periphery of the former Germanic imperial space, political neutralization had as its counterpart the development of an equally neutral "culture" which, in various forms, is the typical expression of an allergy and hostility to the imperial idea and, consequently, of the very disease from which modern Europe suffers. Yet these countries were to exert a particular attraction on thinkers and intellectuals who, while belonging to other countries, embraced the ideal of "neutral" culture. In Wilhelmian Germany itself, such a spiritual climate had gained increasing ground, giving rise to an intellectual and moral "Helvetization" or "Hollandization", which was matched by pacifist, anti-Prussian, anti-militarist and anti-political tendencies. Until recently, culture par excellence was precisely that of "neutral" intellectuality.

Steding clearly accuses all those who were its representatives, in a list that ranges from Burckhardt to Jung,

Bachofen and Huizinga to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Söderblom, Ibsen and Strindberg; from Keyserling, Steiner, Van der Velde and Klages to Barth, Freud, Thomas Mann, Stefan George and more. Such an association of names will surprise more than one reader. There's no denying that Steding's criticism is sometimes one-sided, but its underlying rationale is nonetheless justified and bears the stamp of profound coherence. To fully understand the meaning, we need to distinguish between two types of culture. On the one hand, there is an organic, unitary culture, intimately linked to a formative political force and, therefore, ultimately to the very idea of State and Empire. On the other, there is a culture that embraces the principle of dualism, isolation, escape, separation and the absolutization of the particular. According to Steding, this second culture basically has no reality of its own: it represents only the twilight or "autumnal" stage of the first, which ends up forgetting both what it is and its own origin (p. 633 ff.); and it is only for this reason that it conceives artificial antitheses between spirit and power, between intellectuality and the state, between civic forces and heroic and political forces - as if, historically too, the antecedent of a Sophocles, for example, had not been Thermopylae (p. 721).

The unity of a people, or a group of peoples, determined by an empire, is also reflected in a unity, an integration of the individual. Wherever the dualistic principle asserts itself - be it in men or in their works and creations - the symptom of a disease, a dissociation, a "neutralization" is manifest, proceeding from the obscuration and withering away of the imperial idea (p. 140, 165 ff.).

So it is that Steding, after indicting the so-called "dialectical theology" of Barth and the similar conceptions of Kierkegaard - which always have in view a torn human nature, a problematic soul that goes from crisis to crisis - does not spare Nietzsche himself, whom he calls "the great split man", putting "the great split man" at the center of his thinking.

the contradictory, impulsive, incoherent and anti-architectonic aspects of his thinking. In this thinker, who made Switzerland his homeland of choice, and to whom the climate of Bismarckian Germany had become unbearable, Steding detects affinities, including on a racial level, with the Baltic and Slavic element that had always undermined the Empire, and which betrays itself in the torn and contradictory characters of a Dostoyevsky (pp. 91, 158).

The fracturing of the Empire's unity by the "neutral" states is also matched by the crisis of all objective, normative authority and source of commitment, a crisis highlighted by a whole series of cultural phenomena. Generally speaking, the first symptom is particularism. Particular aspects of a whole are experienced separately and become absolutes. Hence, for example, the tendency towards intimism and subjectivism: this is the culture that wants nothing to do with the grand scheme of things, and "escapes" into the world of interiority, conceived as a world in itself, where only what is psychologically and aesthetically "interesting" is of value - to which may be added nostalgia and exhumations of the past (p. 201). A certain historiography - one of the typical representatives cited by Steding is the Swiss Burckhardt - was born on the same basis, hypostasizing a "history of culture" cut off from the great political history. Steding is less convincing when he also attacks the Swiss Bachofen², who embodied

² When it comes to the traditional revision of ancient history, particularly Roman history, J. Evola has always been interested in the research of Johann Jakob Bachofen, a nineteenth-century Swiss writer and author of numerous outstanding philological and archaeological studies. It was precisely Evola who made this author known in Italy beyond specialized circles by translating an anthology of Bachofen's texts: *Le Madn e la virilità olimpica* (Bocca, Milan, 1949), accompanied by commentaries and a lengthy introduction [Note by R.D.P.] - [This introduction was translated into French: cf. J. Evola, *Les Mères et la virilité olympienne*, in *Rebis*, 8, Summer 1985, p. 1-8 - N.D.T.].

a romantic tendency to value the irrational, vital substratum of civilizations and matriarchal origins, the world of symbols, myths and primordial cults. More generally, he pillories irrationalism. The aversion to the *ratio* in the name of all that is life, biology and instinct, itself reflects a phobia for the imperial organic idea, which sublimates and dominates life (p. 295). This is why a Burckhardt judged the Roman state to be "barbaric" (p. 332), while a Mommsen understood its meaning, just as he had understood that of the Bismarckian warrior state (p. 295).

In "neutral" culture, the process of dissociation takes various forms. Either what is dissociated and considered in itself turns out to be the "soul", the psyche - and then we have all the varieties of psychologism; or it's the lower part of the soul itself, i.e. the unconscious and subconscious - and then we have psychoanalysis, the philosophy of the unconscious, the new mysticism of "life", whether that cultivated by Klages or the Swiss C.G. Jung. Sometimes it's economics - and then we have historical materialism and the "sociological" interpretation of history; sometimes it's sexuality - and then we have, apart from the various varieties of psychoanalysis, a whole series of erotic books or popular pseudo-scientific works focusing on normal or abnormal forms of *Veros* - such as Van der Velde or Hirschfeld. Then there's the purely aesthetic element - and then we have phenomena like Stefan George and the various "humanist" trends. And so on. The cradle of this culture has been the "neutral" countries. And Steding's very close analysis reveals its pathological premises, insofar as it is always a culture that has asserted itself in parallel with the decline of the organic imperial idea.

Scientism and the positivist myth belong to the same universe. Materialism, the obsession with "pure facts", once again marks a split, a "split" between the two.

one-sided, flat exaltation of what is only a part of the whole that is reality (p. 303). In this respect, Steding turns the thesis of "objectivity", so dear to "neutral" science, on its head. For him, a science is objective only when it is political, for only then is there coincidence between the spirit and the law according to which a civilization develops and the existence of a race is concretely affirmed. Conversely, it is to the extent that a science claims to be apolitical that it renounces all objectivity, because it ends up adopting as a criterion of objectivity what is merely the particular point of view of an individual or a school (p. 299). This is precisely what the science of "neutral" cultures is all about. Steding asserts without flinching that "every objective scientific truth was once an order". In the field of the positive sciences themselves, all certainty is also linked to the force of decision that creates empires: all certainty is initially born in a "Prussian" way, and only later, by "devirilizing", does it assume an "apolitical" character (pp. 572-573). The very distinction between the positive sciences and the others - which would not be "positive" because their object is of a spiritual nature - marks a pathological dualism: "The exactitude of the natural sciences arose from the tacit agreement to ignore everything that might disturb exactitude itself, namely first and foremost the qualitative element, which is essential in the world" (p. 615). The fact that a "circumcised nature", i.e. one reduced to a purely quantitative element, could be considered truly real is a further sign of a humanity that is not "in order", of a humanity that is internally torn and as it were naturalized (p. 616).

Other symptoms of regression and split: the evasion, typical of a certain spiritualism, towards oriental or far-eastern forms of mind; the cult of "relics of the past", including the aestheticizing veneration for "heroes" and "geniuses"; a certain prehistoric research that takes refuge in the nebulous world of origins.

and even certain spiritualizations of the idea of Empire, where the concept of a more or less universalist spiritual *Regnum* is so emphasized that the idea becomes something totally unreal and inconsistent. On another level, Steding sees a typical phenomenon of the splitting and emancipation of the particular in the feminist and women's liberation movement, which developed from the Netherlands and the Scandinavian states - i.e., particularly "neutralized" areas of the former European imperial space (pp. 274-5).

Of key importance is what Steding writes about the dissociation and regression reflected in the one-sided, polemical emphasis placed on the naturalistic substratum of life - whether this is conceived as "race" and "blood community" or as "mass" and "people". For Steding, as indeed for us, all this simply corresponds to the element "matter", against which "State" and "Empire" represent the element "form" - the latter being vis-à-vis the former like the male principle vis-à-vis the female principle, like the idea (in the Platonic sense) vis-à-vis nature. By this criterion, democracy perpetuates itself in a certain nationalism, but also in a certain racism, since it is always a question of "matter" tending to emancipate itself from "form", absolutizing itself and seeking to undermine the higher political authority to which mass, people and nation must submit. For Steding, state and empire are therefore superior to nations, peoples and ethnic groups. It is "men", he writes, who declare themselves for the state, while "matriarchal" natures declare themselves for the people and deify them. But where such a cult is born, the pathological dissociation peculiar to twilight, anti-imperial Europe asserts itself once again (pp. 217, 218, 223, 229, 230).

With the Empire, all dualism between state and people-race is overcome: a firm political will holds "the people" in its grip, preventing it from deviating. A people can only really exist when it has the will and the means to do so.

In itself, it is no more than a *materia prima* (pp. 292-3, 223, 228), assuming a personality only when the virile component, represented by the State and the Empire, is neutralized. The importance of Steding's views lies in the fact that, thanks to them, certain socializing aspects of Nazi ideology are overcome, and a fundamental convergence appears between it and the Fascist conception. Of course, as Frank points out in his introduction (p. XXV), Steding does not conceive of the political idea - in relation to which people, nation and race are merely *materia prima* - in the abstract, almost as if it had fallen from the sky or was its agent: Steding, too, conceives of it in relation to a "race". But here, "race" is understood in a higher sense: it is what we have called the "race of the spirit" or the "solar element of a race". This is confirmed at the end of the book (pp. 516, 587), when Steding elaborates on the concept of the "dominating race". This is not a naturalistic concept. Steding argues that, even if we were to refer to the North Germanic Aryan races, to which some attribute traits of superiority, we must convince ourselves that they too need a kind of transfiguration that tears them away from the naturalistic state, conditioned solely by blood, and raises them to the plane of the spirit - the only one that, for the State, for the Empire and at every turning point in great History, has a decisive character. A race must be struck by the "thunderbolt of Apollo" and, beyond the weight of passions and instincts, possess the "fire" capable of enlightening other peoples, and federating them within a great imperial formation (p. 587). This same symbolic "thunderbolt of Apollo" is necessary for the emergence and imposition of evidence and truths, so that the very system of sciences and particular disciplines, in parallel with the affirmation of an imperial will, takes on the superior form of a living, unitary, decision-making organism (p. 603), not "neutral" but decisive and "neutral" (p. 604).

normative (p. 602). It is only then that materialism will be overcome, that "matter" will be liberated from its particularisms and take on a "form": in close relation to the spiritually centralizing action inscribed in the imperial idea (p. 303).

On the contrary, the "culture" born of old Europe's extenciation and neutralization is characterized by a recurrent attitude of contestation against the political element, by a lack of understanding of any spirituality that is also power, by a hysterical opposition to any attempt to include intellectuality and science once again within political unity. Everything that is organization, discipline, positive order, will, appears to such a "culture" as "barbarism", as "despotism", as "materialism" (pp. 250, 297, 327). These are reactions of a spiritually feminine substance, whereas, let us repeat, it is the virile element that expresses itself in the political concept of State and Empire. The belles-lettres, the arts and sciences, civilization conceived as aesthetic and humanistic refinement, represent, in the context of such an anti-political polemic, only symptoms of illness and hysteria. What purports to be "wit" and "defense of the spirit" is really nothing more than an opposition between negation and affirmation - between banter, play, adventure, rambling and chatter and then seriousness, strength, architectonic style (pp. 340, 341, 386).

Steding does not fail to point out, however, what has often provided weapons for the polemic of neutral culture. On more than one occasion, the political element has been seen to rigorify, to simply survive the great actions that came from the most intimate substance of a people, which called it to life, forged it, and from which a mentality, a culture, a science, all proceeded at the same time (pp. 446, 453). But this is playing with words. Referring to the very field of "militarism", so abhorred by "neutral" intellectuals, Steding notes that the organization of a victorious war implies a debauchery of intellectual energies, of which the "representatives of culture" - who are

usually mere literati, people who indulge in speculation and rhyme - often don't have a clue (p. 334). For Steding, an empire manifests itself not only through its own architecture, science and literature, but also, and just as perfectly, through the creation of submarines, tanks and bombing planes. All this is aimed at building the ironclad an empire needs to defend itself, for the danger of "culture"-fostered dissolution and the irruption of races without history is ever present - as is the threat of those who, precisely in the name of so-called "civilization", would violate this higher principle (p. 498, 503). One civilization is opposed by another: a negative, feminine civilization, linked to the period of deficiency of the imperial idea, is opposed by a positive civilization, based on the transfiguration and domination of all the dark, threatening forces of the terrestrial element, within the rigid framework of discipline. This second culture can be seen in the very style of Prussianism. And from this point of view, it is precisely *Vautre culture* that appears "barbaric" (p. 519). A supratemporal, "eternal" order can only become a reality within an empire - from which it follows that outside the Empire, there is no true civilization (p. 636, 519, 520).

Steding believed that we were moving towards a new imperial era that would mark the end of the sickness of European culture. The new Empire, by dedicating itself to the restoration of a European truth and general order, will act in a practically "catalytic" way. Its very presence will have a destructive effect on all forms of "neutralization", and will determine a process of rebirth and refocusing which, in a certain sense, in its objectivity and impersonality, will be universal in character. For individuals too, the Empire represents the best therapy against all forms of "liberation", uncertainty, internal contradiction and escapism, as it

will lead them beyond themselves, where their will is directed towards a higher purpose. And Steding reports the words Frederick the Great is said to have uttered, like a recruitment notice: "My boys, would you have liked to live forever?" (p. 658, 282).

These are the fundamental ideas set out by Steding, which, as we have said, express the most positive tendencies of the new Germany. The reservations that can be made are as follows.

We have translated the word *Reich* as "Empire" or "imperial idea" in order to highlight the general value of many of Steding's conceptions. He himself recognized the close relationship between the political idea of the state as a virile formative force and the Roman tradition. For him, the Roman state was more of a "state" than any other, and it was for this reason that, for medieval Germans, it had ideal value (p. 294, XV). This overcomes the slyly anti-Roman tendencies of certain German extremist circles, against which Steding also took a stand in developing his ideas on the relationship between state, people and race. To a large extent, it was the great imperial tradition, in which the Germanic and Roman elements coincide, that Steding took up. This being the case, it would have been appropriate to say what role, apart from the Nordic-Germanic idea, the Roman idea must play in the desired revival of such a tradition, and consequently to allude to the fact that here, the Nordic-Germanic type must have as its corollary the Aryan-Roman type, with a view to reciprocal integration. While acknowledging the "Roman" element present in the Prussian political idea itself, Steding nevertheless overlooks this point and develops his considerations in a rather one-sided way, because he seems to have in mind above all the Germanic *Reich* as created by Bismarck, *that Reich* which, after a period of latency and rigidification, would reassert itself as an ideal in National Socialism.

But even if we were to limit the horizon in this way, the question of

To what extent these more recent forms of the *Reich* correspond purely and simply to the traditional conception could be a question for Steding. Bismarck's own actions, if viewed from this perspective, are not without their darker side³. Steding virtually ignores the fact that the construction of the Bismarckian state was linked to a serious blow to the prestige of Austria, which was in fact the legitimate heir to the Holy Roman Empire. Steding's irony towards Austria is often of dubious taste, reflecting the rather trivial commonplaces so common in modern Germany. He correctly observes that Austria was going through a phase of degeneration, so that Germany was entitled to inherit it. But is Steding really sure that what Germany had already taken over in Bismarck's time was exactly the principle embodied by Austria up to that point? What Steding writes about federalism (p. 196 ff.), for example, is hardly convincing. In its current phase of development, the Reich is affected by a centralism that is difficult to reconcile with the traditional hierarchical idea - to the extent that its overcoming will undoubtedly constitute the necessary condition for a new European imperial idea.

By referring too insistently to the simply Prussian ideal of the state, Steding often gives the impression of conceiving the idea of Empire in a somewhat secular and secular way - which would then reflect one of the typical splits in the sickness of European culture. On page 337, for example, he contrasts the bond of the medieval Empire, which was religious, with a bond that should be "essentially political". Elsewhere (pp. 241, 350), he criticizes the Hohenstaufens for cultivating "unrealistic" and "utopian" conceptions. It's true that elsewhere, he recalls the role played by the notion of Providence

³See E. Malynski and L. de Poncins, *La guerre occulte*, Beauchesne, Paris, 1936.

and divine decision in the thinking of modern *Reich* leaders (p. 514). But these are only hints. Steding does not tell us what supranatural foundation and precise worldview must guide the *Reich* so that its formative, organizing and animating force asserts itself in all areas of civilization.

As we've seen, some of Steding's criticisms are one-sided: in order to denounce error, he sometimes overlooks the positive contribution that certain authors or trends can make to his own ideas. When, for example, he evokes the "luminous divinities of the world of politics" in opposition to the obscure region of myths, symbols and primordial traditions, he runs the risk of ending up, unwillingly, in rationalism (p. 339, 76, 226), whereas he perfectly conceives the possibility of an exploration of the spiritual world that would have the same characteristics of exactitude and clarity as the natural sciences (p. 617). Many of Steding's accusations against Bachofen are downright unfair: on the contrary, Bachofen's work contains many elements that support the virile, "Apollonian" ideal of a "Roman" state, as opposed to the equivocal world of the naturalistic, matriarchal substratum. And, in the final analysis, Steding was often influenced by Bachofen's salutary conceptions.

Nor is the attention many pay to the East merely a variety of the escapism peculiar to the European soul. It should not be forgotten that many Eastern traditions retain traces of a common Aryan heritage, with a purity not always found elsewhere. Even the new directions taken by the science of prehistory have a definite spiritual value, which Steding fails to see: on this point, he seems to display a certain "political" narrowness (in the modern, pejorative sense of the word).

Steding's attitude to Nietzsche is similarly one-sided. It's highly debatable whether Nietzsche's doctrine of the superman actually expresses..,

as Steding believes, a revolt against the concept of the State. Rather, the opposite would appear to be true, namely that the State and Empire are hardly conceivable without some reference to the doctrine of the superman, which exalts an elite, a dominating race with a specific spiritual authority. Indeed, only an elite conceived in this way can provide the basis for the primacy that Steding claims for the state in the face of what is merely "the people". He comes close to this idea when he speaks of those who are "struck by Apollo's thunderbolt", but fails to develop it further.

Generally speaking, while Steding's work appears perfectly well-founded in its critical part, it reveals a certain weakness when it comes to the transcendent reference points needed to be able to truly justify a *Reich* or Empire, as he conceives it. In the face of the insubstantial, neutral world of the dominant culture, in the face of a whole range of dissociative and regressive phenomena that so many aspects of the modern Western mentality express, Steding once again appeals to an ideal of civilization which, in its harshness, its assertiveness, its warlike virility, its desire for form, discipline, organicity and absolute unity, can be said to be Prussian as well as Roman. But this ideal needs to be illuminated, as it were, and brought back to a very specific spirituality and authentic tradition, in order to avert the danger that the purely political aspect will end up prevailing, even if it is imbued with a vague mystique. Be that as it may, Steding's work represents a noteworthy step forward - especially in Germany - in terms of clarifying ideas, aligning positions and consciously reviving that imperial idea which, as Steding has shown, is identified with the reality of the better Europe.

X

1951

ON THE SPIRITUAL AND STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS OF EUROPEAN UNITY*.

Today, by the very force of events, the need for unity is finally taking hold on our continent. So far, however, it has been fuelled mainly by negative factors: we want to unite in order to defend ourselves, and what comes into play is not a positive or pre-existing motivation, but rather the realization that we have virtually no other choice in the face of threatening pressure from extra-European blocs and interests. As a result, we have no clear vision of the internal configuration of a genuine European unity. For the time being, it seems that we're barely moving beyond the project of a coalition or federation which, as such, will always be extrinsic in character, not *organic* but associative and, consequently, contingent. We could, however, conceive of a truly organic unity, but only on the basis of a formative force, both

* This text previously appeared, under the title *Sur les fondements spirituels et structuraux de l'unité européenne* (trans. by Paul Durand), in *Défense de l'Occident*, no. 167, July-August 1979, pp. 17-28 [N.D.T.].

internal and from above, specific to a common idea, culture and tradition. However, anyone wishing to approach the European problem in these terms cannot fail to see how unfavourable the current situation is, and how many problematic factors prevent us from being lulled into easy optimism.

These aspects of the European problem have received considerable attention. Ulick Varange's¹ *Imperium* (Wes-tropa Press, London, 1948, two volumes) is a significant work on this subject, which can be used to complete the analysis of the difficulties mentioned above.

Varange's argument for European unity is not purely political, however, and is based on a general philosophy of history and civilization inspired by Oswald Spengler. The Spenglerian concept is well known: there is no linear development of civilization in the singular: history is broken down into distinct but parallel cycles of civilization, each of which constitutes an organism, experiencing, like all organisms, phases of youth, maturity, old age and decline. In each cycle, Spengler distinguishes between a period of "culture" (*Kultur*) and a period of "civilization" (*Zivilisation*). The

¹ Ulick Varange is the pseudonym of the American Francis Parker Yockey (1917-1960), a typical example of a "victim" of the modern repressive system of Western democracies. In 1946, Yockey, who had dared to comment on the legality of prosecutions against "war criminals" (he was himself an employee of the Nuremberg Tribunal), was forced to resign. He lived in Brittas Bay, Ireland, in 1947-48, where he devoted himself to writing his voluminous *Imperium*, first printed in London in only a thousand copies, then in the United States (Noontide Press, with a preface by William Carto), to which he had returned and where, from 1952, his political persecution began. Initially arrested for a trivial passport affair, Yockey appeared before Judge Caresh on a charge of "opinion offence". It was during his trial that he was found dead, for "mysterious" reasons, in his cell [Note by R.D.P.].

The first is that of the origins; under the sign of quality, it is characterized by form, differentiation, national articulations and living traditions. The second, on the other hand, is the autumnal, twilight phase, in which the destructive forces of materialism and rationalism come into play, leading to mechanicism, formless greatness - the reign of quantity. According to Spengler, these phenomena are inevitable in any cycle of civilization. They are biologically conditioned.

Let's leave Spengler there. Var ange follows him, and also agrees with him in considering the European world as one of those cultural organisms endowed with a life of its own, developing a specific idea, having a particular destiny. He also follows him in noting that the cyclical phase in which Europe and the West now find themselves is that of "civilization". But unlike Spengler - who, at least initially, had coined the famous phrase "the decline of the West" in response to this situation - Varange seeks to transform evil into remedy, to make the best of a bad situation by speaking of new forces obeying the imperative of rebirth, and of values irreducible to materialism and rationalism. Beyond the ruins of yesterday's world, cyclical development would carry Europe into a new era of "absolute politics", supranationality and authority - that of *VImperium*. Conform to this biological imperative in the age of civilization, or perish: that would be the alternative for Europe itself.

If we follow this line of thought, what would ideally belong to the past, to yesterday's world, would not only be the scientific, materialist conception of the universe, but also liberalism and democracy, communism and the UN, pluralist states and nationalist particularism. The historical imperative would be to build Europe as a national, cultural, racial and state unit, under the auspices of a principle of restored authority and of

new, precise biological discriminations between friend and foe, between our own world and a foreign, "barbarian" world.

It's worth saying a few words about what Varange calls the "pathology of cultures". The realization of the inner, natural law of a culture as an organism can be hindered by processes of distortion (*culture-distortion*), when foreign elements within it channel its energy towards actions and ends that have no connection with its real, vital requirements, and instead play into the hands of external forces. This has a direct application in the field of warfare, since the real alternative, according to Varange, is not between war and peace, but between wars that are useful and necessary to a culture, and those that alter and disintegrate it. This is the case not when we enter into conflict with a real enemy, biologically threatening the material and spiritual organism of the culture to which we belong - a hypothesis in which only "total war" is conceivable - but when a war of this type breaks out within a culture *itself*, as was precisely the case for the West with the last two conflagrations. During these conflicts, heads of state preferred the ruin of Europe and the fatal subjugation of their homelands to foreign, "barbaric" peoples from East and West, rather than cooperate in a new Europe that aimed to move beyond the world of the 19th century and reorganize itself under new symbols of authority and sociality. The fatal consequence of such a choice is now clearly visible: it was not the victory of a few European nations over others, but that of anti-Europe, Asia and America over Europe in general.

This accusation is aimed primarily at England, but Varange also extends it to the United States of America, believing that their entire intervention policy has developed under the effect of a "cultural distortion", by focusing on objectives deprived of any organic link with vital national necessities.

At this point, the pace is quickening, and it's a question of whether or not the West recognizes the biological imperative that corresponds to the current phase of its cycle: overcoming the divisions between states and creating the unity of the European nation-state, uniting against anti-Europe.

The first objective will be internal and spiritual. Europe must rid itself of traitors, parasites and agents of "distortion". European culture must detoxify itself of the residues of the materialistic, economic, egalitarian and rationalist conceptions of the 19th century. Secondly, the rediscovered unity of Europe as a civilization or culture must be expressed in a corresponding political unity; this must be pursued at all costs, possibly at the cost of civil wars and struggles against the powers that wish to keep Europe under their yoke. Federations, customs unions and other economic measures cannot be solutions; unity must be born of an internal imperative - an imperative that should be realized even if it appears economically disadvantageous, since economic criteria can no longer be considered the ultimate value in a new era. Thirdly, the problem of the space needed to overpopulate the European nation could arise: for Varange, the best solution would be to advance eastwards, where, under the mask of communism, the power of races that are secularly and biologically hostile to Western civilization is gathering and organizing.

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For our purposes, this overview of Varange's work will suffice. Let's see what we have to say about it.

The fundamental symbol evoked by Varange is the

of *Imperium* and a new principle of authority. We believe, however, that he fails to see clearly the full implications of such a symbol, once it is assumed as it should be. Varange is not aware of the distance separating this symbol from everything that belongs to the endemic "civilization" phase of any culture, in this case that of Europe.

In our view, we should not hesitate to follow Varange in denouncing the inadequacy of any federalist or economic solution to the European problem. As we've already said, true unity can only be *organic*, and we're well aware of the pattern: it's the one that once took shape in the form of the medieval oecumene, for example. Unity and multiplicity are equally present, and this model is expressed in the form of a system of hierarchical participation. What we need to overcome and leave behind once and for all is nationalism, as a schismatic absolutisation of the particular, and move on (or return) from there to the natural concept of nationality. Within each national space, a process of integration would then have to take place - politically speaking - which would coordinate forces in a hierarchical structure, and establish an order based on a central principle of authority and sovereignty. An identical process would later take place within the supranational space that is Europe in general: nations as organic partial units gravitating around *unum quod non est pars* (to borrow a phrase from Dante), i.e. around a principle of authority hierarchically superior to each of them. To be such, this principle must necessarily transcend the political realm in the strict sense, and be founded and legitimized on the basis of an idea, a tradition, a spiritual power. This would be the birth of *VImprium*, the virile and organic European unity, truly emancipated from all levelling ideologies - liberal, democratic, chauvinist and collectivist - and capable, by the same token, of taking a clear stand on its own.

distances from both "East" and "West" - in other words, from the two blocks which, like the jaws of a single pair of pliers, are closing in on us.

That's why the postulate for a move in this direction is not the dissolution of nations into a single nation, into a kind of homogeneous European social substance, but rather the organic integration of each nation. Authentic, organic unity is not achieved at the base, but at the top. Once *Vhybris* nationahste, which always corresponds to a demagogic, collectivizing and schismatic phase, has been destroyed, once the individual nations have been hierarchically constituted, a virtual unification will take shape, capable of extending beyond the nations - which will nevertheless be left with their own individuality and configuration.

Everything would be in its place. The unfortunate thing is that the natural framework for such a realization is that of a world going through a phase of "culture", not "civilization", to use Spenglé-rian terminology. Authors like Varange mix up things that belong on different planes, and go astray - as Mussolini himself did in his day. Probably unaware of Spengler's seminal work, Mussolini read *Jahre der Entscheidung*²; he was struck by the prognosis of a new Caesarism or Bonapartism, which is why he wanted it translated into Italian. But Mussolini didn't

² A new Italian edition, with a preface by Julius Evola, appeared under the title *Anni decisivi*, ed. "Il Borghese", Milan, 1973. Evola was the Italian translator of Spengler's main work, *The Decline of the West*; cf. *Il tramonto dell'Occidente*, Longanesi, Milan, 1957; 1970; 1978 [Note by R.D.P.]. - *Jahre der Entscheidung* has been translated into French: cf. *Années décisives*, Mercure de France, 1934; II^e ed.: 1943; III^e ed.: Copernicus, 1980 (with a preface by Alain de Benoist) - N.D.T.].

Spengler's view of the place of such forms in the cyclical development of civilizations: it is when the world of tradition collapses, when there is no longer a *Kultur* but only a *Zivilisation*, when qualitative values have disappeared and the shapeless "mass" prevails, it is then, precisely, in the autumnal, twilight phase of a cycle, that nations fade away in favor of the great supranational aggregations, which manifest themselves under the sign of pseudo-Cesarism, of centralized personal power, in itself deprived of form and higher legitimacy. Of *Vlmpe- rium* in the true, traditional sense, all this is but a distorted, inverted image; it is not Empire, but at most "imperialism" and, for Spengler, a last gasp before the end - the end of one civilization, which may be followed by another, with no link of continuity with the previous one.

And yet, when Varange speaks of the new era of "absolute politics" and of blocs which, having absorbed the nations of a single civilization into a single organism, should adopt as their ultimate criterion the absolute, existential distinction between friend and foe (a thesis borrowed from Carl Schmitt, who defined the essence of purely political modern units in these terms) and the pure biological imperative, it remains precisely on the level of "civilization" and "totalitary" collectivizing processes, which must be seen as sub-national rather than supranational, and whose closest and most coherent realization can be found today in Stalinism. Clearly, if European unity were to take this form, the West might be able to resist and recover materially and biologically against non-European imperialist powers, but it would nonetheless have abdicated internally, and Europe and the European tradition would be finished.

waiting for the general disintegrating factors inherent in technico-mechanical civilization to make themselves felt. This, more or less, is the prognosis Burnham also makes when he considers the possible outcomes of what he calls the ongoing *managerial revolution*³.

Are other perspectives still possible? It's hard to say. As far as nations are concerned, each one can only maintain its individuality and dignity as an organic "partial whole", or subordinate itself to a higher order, in the two cases already indicated: either in the extrinsic and non-binding case of material utility and external necessity; or when the nation directly recognizes a truly superior authority, not purely political and not liable to be monopolized by any one nation as part of a "hegemony". Where can such a point of reference be found? We like to talk about European tradition, European civilization, Europe as an autonomous organism, but unfortunately, if we look at things today and measure them against the yardstick of absolute values, we see that there is little more to all this than slogans and mere phrases.

At the highest level, it is clear that the soul of a supranational European bloc should be religious: religious not in the abstract, but in reference to a precise, positive spiritual authority. However, even if we disregard the widespread secularization and laicization processes that have already taken place in Europe, there is no such thing on our continent today. Catholicism is the religion of only a few European nations - and we have seen, moreover, in an era incomparably more favorable than the present one, in the post-Napoleonic era, that the Holy Alliance - in tra-

³ James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*, New York, 1941 [tr. fr.: *L'ère des organisateurs*, Calmann-Lévy, 1947 - Editor's note].

towards which the idea of a traditional and virile solidarity of European nations was expressed - was such in name only, and lacked a genuine religious legitimacy, an exalted and universal idea. If it were only a generic Christianity, it would be too little, too disembodied and shapeless, not exclusively European, not likely to become the monopoly of European civilization. Moreover, we can only have doubts about the possibility of reconciling pure Christianity with a "metaphysics of Empire": the medieval conflict between the two powers, provided we understand its true terms, teaches us as much.

Let's leave this field and move on to culture. Is it possible today to speak of a differentiated European culture - or rather, of a spirit that remains *unique*, in its varied and harmonious expressions, as the culture of each of the European nations? Once again, it would be imprudent to answer in the affirmative, and for a reason that Christoph Steding made clear in a remarkable book dealing precisely with "Empire" and the "sickness of European culture"⁴. This reason has to do with what the author calls the *neutralization of European culture*: a culture that no longer conforms to a common political idea; a "private" culture, in transit, cosmopolitan, disaggregated, anti-architectonic, subjectivist, neutral and truly anonymous in its scientist and positivist aspects. To put all this down to a "pathology of culture", to a "distorting" action, external and ephemeral, implemented by foreign elements, as Varange would have it - and not just for Europe, but for America - is a rather simplistic way of thinking. Generally speaking, where can we find today..,

⁴ Christoph Steding, *Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur*, Hamburg, 1938. - [For a review of this book, see Evola's previous article in this collection - Note by R.D.P.].

In a phase of "civilization", a cultural base sufficiently differentiated to be able to seriously oppose the "foreigner", the "barbarian", to ourselves, and how did we find it in the case of previous imperial spaces? We'd have to go a long way to do this, and engage in a process of detoxification and reintegration, because while we can rightly consider certain aspects of North American and Russian-Bolshevik civilization to be barbaric and anti-European, we mustn't lose sight of the fact that both are nothing more than the extreme development of tendencies and evils that first appeared in Europe. This is precisely why Europe is so permeable to the influences of the other.

At this point, we're in a state of equivocation even when it comes to "tradition". For a long time now, the West has not known what "tradition" is in the highest sense, anti-traditional mentality and Western mentality having been identified since the time of the Renaissance⁵. Tradition" in its fullest sense is a category that belongs to the epochs that Vico would have called the "heroic ages": when a single formative force, with metaphysical origins, manifested itself as much in mores as in worship, law, myth, artistic creations - in short, in every particular area of existence. Where can we find today the survival of tradition in this sense? Particularly as a European tradition, a great, unanimous tradition, not a village or folk tradition? It is rather in the sense of level-headed "totalitarianism" that tendencies towards politico-cultural unity have emerged. In concrete terms, "European tradition" understood as culture currently has no content other than subjective and more or less divergent interpretations.

⁵ Cf. René Guénon, *La crise du monde moderne*, Bossard, 1927 - [This work was translated into Italian by Evola - Note by R.D.P.].

The "Volta Congresses" yesterday, and many similar initiatives today, have provided sufficiently unedifying evidence of this.

These and similar considerations lead to a single fundamental conclusion: a supranational unity with positive, organic features is not conceivable in a period of "civilization". What is conceivable in such a period is, at best, the merging of nations into a more or less shapeless power bloc, where the political principle becomes the ultimate instance subjugating all moral and spiritual factors: either as the "telluric" world of "world revolution" (Keyserling), or as the world of "absolute politics" (Varange), or in the form of new totalitarian complexes in the hands of *managers* (Burnham), as has already been sensed here and there. Unity according to "tradition" is something very different.

Should we then draw up a negative balance sheet and settle for a more modest, federalist, "social" or societal idea? Not necessarily, because once the antithesis has been established, all we have to do is orient ourselves accordingly. If it is absurd to pursue the highest ideal within the framework of a "civilization", because it would be deviated from and counterfeited there, we must see in the overcoming of precisely what has the character of a "civilization", the condition of any truly constructive initiative. "Civilization" is more or less the same as "the modern world", and without any illusions, we must recognize that it is precisely the West - and let's even say Europe - that is eminently responsible for this "modern world", with its materialism, economism, rationalism and other factors of involution and dissolution. First and foremost, therefore, there needs to be a renewal that has a spiritual impact, awakening new forms of sensitivity and interest, and consequently a new inner style, a new fundamental and homogeneous orientation of the spirit. To this

On this subject, we need to realize that it's not just a question of overcoming the various aspects of the nineteenth-century conception of existence, as Varange would have us do, for this conception is itself the effect of more ancient causes. We must also express specific reservations about Spengler's biologizing interpretation of civilization, especially if we are to believe, with the aforementioned author, in an almost fatal upturn heralded by various symptoms. Nor should we rely too heavily on the ideas of yesterday's revolutionary and renewal movements: in these movements, several tendencies, sometimes even opposed to each other, coexisted and could only have been positively defined if circumstances had made their full development possible, which was instead shattered by the military defeat.

On the political level, it is the crisis of the principle of authority that seems to us to constitute the most serious difficulty - let's say, or repeat, authority in the true sense, authority capable of bringing about obedience, but also sincere adherence and direct recognition : for only such an authority can lead, within a nation, to the overcoming of individualism and "socialism" and, in the European space, to the reduction of nationalist *Vhybris*, of "sacred pride" and of the stiffening on the principle of particular state sovereignties, by means other than those of necessity or conjunctural interests. If there's anything specific to the Aryan-Western tradition, it's the spontaneous union of free men, proud to serve a leader truly worthy of the name. For true European unity, we can only conceive of something that repeats this situation, "heroic" in its own way, and not that of a "parliament" or an ersatz joint-stock company.

The error of those who accept a kind of political agnosticism for the European idea is thus clear, reducing it to a kind of shapeless common denominator.

tallization, and the form of the whole cannot fail to be reflected in that of the parts. With a background not of "civilization" but of *tradition*, this form can only be organic and hierarchical. The closer we get to supranational unity, the more we proceed in this direction in particular, i.e. national, spaces.

The fact that multiple external factors are now making us feel that, for Europe, forming a bloc is a matter of life and death - this necessity must in turn lead us to recognize the twofold internal problem that needs to be solved in order to provide a solid basis for a possible European front: on the one hand, the problem of progressively and effectively overcoming what relates to an era of "civilization"; on the other, the problem of a kind of "metaphysics" capable of justifying a principle - whether national, supranational or European - of pure authority.

This double problem brings us back to im double imperative. It remains to be seen how many men, today, are still standing amid so many ruins to understand and assume this imperative.

SECOND PART

ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL CRITICISM

I

1935

ABOUT THE FRENCH-ITALIAN CORPORATE CONGRESS

Attending the Italian-French Congress of Corporate Studies recently held in Rome, we couldn't help but think of the timeliness of the comments made more than once in these columns on the ambiguous use of the word "revolution". A word which, when applied to fascism, takes on a meaning diametrically opposed to the subversive, left-wing one that prevailed before - to the extent that it is impossible to refer, even partially, to such a meaning without leading to a radical misunderstanding of the nature and the true and highest aims of our movement.

As a result, the use of the word "revolution" in the context of the Corporative Congress gave rise to some highly unusual positions on the part of the French, almost all of whom represented the socialist movement, and who set out to find the "revolution" in the Italian corporative system. Insofar as, naturally, they didn't find much in the way of a "revolution" in the Italian corporate system.

* We have faithfully translated Evola's thought, using the adjective *corporativo*, "corporate". But the author, of course, goes on to speak of "fascist corporatism (*corporativismo*)".

to the idea they had of it by reference to the meaning given, by them, to this word within the framework of pure syndicalism, they more or less concluded that we were quite "backward" and much more "revolutionary" in word than in deed. And the best part is that some of our comrades - whose previous trade-union experience has been definitively integrated into the superior set of ideas inherent in fascist corporatism - almost seemed, through a kind of momentary reappearance of this past of theirs, to listen with embarrassment to this reproach formulated by the French, since they felt the need to remind them that the Fascist Revolution is at present far from complete, and that it is well aware of all that still separates it from the realization of its own objectives : as if the latter were precisely those of left-wing syndicalism, to which the observations and judgments of the French congressmen more or less referred.

The same equivocation applies to certain so-called Italian "theorists" of corporatism, who would like to be considered "integral corporatists", discoverers of the internal logic of Fascist corporatism - whereas, with all their smoky dialectics of "idealist" obedience, they're nothing but gadflies in the convoy of true fascist corporatism, which is advancing at a steady, "revolutionary" pace, in a direction quite different from the one they would like to see and which, consequently, they advocate.

That's why it's a good idea to set clear, precise reference points once and for all. There is a revolution whose starting point was the Jacobin revolt, whose continuation was Marxism and whose conclusion was sovietism. This direction is what it is, with very specific features and an unambiguous meaning. As an ideology, it is defined and not open to further development, but at most to softening and compromise as circumstances dictate.

in Russia itself. Ideally, such a "revolution" is bloodless. It's a twilight phenomenon at the end of a cycle that no longer speaks to us at all.

Those who, on the other hand, are "revolutionary" in the sense of the word revolution in fascism, have left this experience behind them: for them, it represents the past, not a "preliminary" phase that should more or less continue, but a deviation that has been overcome. The fundamental principle of Fascism *is of a different nature: its* starting point is not "socialism" at all, but the values of the human personality and its integration into a system where freedom and hierarchy are reconciled: hence a spirit that imbues a different meaning, even to institutions which, from an external point of view, i.e. abstract and mechanical, might have some affinity with the systems proposed by socialism on the basis of a diametrically opposed conception of existence and life in society.

That's why, when more or less overt syndicalists and socialists come to reproach us for being "behind the times", every conscious fascist should reply that those who are "behind the times" today *are precisely them*; that the point they'd like to see us reach is precisely the one *we left behind long ago*; that the "revolutionary" they'd like to see in us is, on the contrary, the counter-revolutionary, and nothing else; that their invitation to move forward is ultimately an invitation to follow the pace of the crayfish - to repeat and experiment with errors or, at least, positions incompatible with our Roman and Italian way of feeling - positions that we instinctively rejected and fought "revolutionarily" at the time of our national crisis.

These are the terms in which the problem must be posed, without compromise: by setting ourselves the primary objective of establishing *principles* perfectly clearly, in order to prevent any maneuvering on the part of those who camouflage their intentions.

confusions, errors and unavowed inclinations behind the ostentatious declaration that corporatism is a purely technical field, themselves wishing to deal only with technical problems of an institutional and economic nature, keeping clear of all "abstract" ideological questions...

II

1936

CORPORATIONS AND HONORARY LAWS

The attempt to create new institutional forms in an intermediary field, equidistant between the public and the private, politics and sociology, law and ethics, is an aspect that belongs to the implementation of the National Socialist idea in Germany.

The definition of this intermediate zone is essentially based on an *organic*, anti-individualist concept. The corresponding reality should be the *corporation*, and its founding principle, *Vhonneur*. In Italy, all this is not totally ignored, since such conceptions have already inspired several important laws in the new Germany, such as the law on the reintegration of the peasantry and the law on the organization of companies and work. However, it cannot be said that the Italians have an in-depth knowledge of the premises and general inspiration of which this legislation is but a consequence. For this reason, it will be useful to say a few words about a recently-published work whose aim is to provide a first systematic exposition of conceptions in this field, and to propose the subsequent legislative developments that these necessarily imply. This

The book is entitled *Dispositions d'honneur pour les corporations professionnelles* (*Berufständische Ehrenordnungen*, Berlin-Leipzig, 1936) and was written by Friedrich Everling, a former member of the Reichstag and a confirmed ideologue of the German nationalist movement¹.

For want of a more appropriate Italian equivalent, we have translated *Stand* as "corporation". A word of caution is in order: this word should not be taken to mean that the Germanic ideology of the *Stand* is similar to that of our corporate organization. Insofar as some have felt it necessary to contrast the principle of the *Stand* with that of our corporation, a clarification is essential, all the more so as it will lead us directly to the idea at the heart of the system, which is precisely what we wanted to focus on.

Everling refers to the sociological distinction, now very much in vogue in Germany, made by Ferdinand Tönnies*: the distinction between "community" - *Gemeinschaft* - and "society" - *Gesellschaft* - with "society" designating any rational, mechanical unit, while "community" would designate any unit conceived as an organism and endowed with a real life of its own. While both terms presuppose a group of associated individuals, "in society, these individuals remain divided even when they are united, whereas in community they remain united in spite of any possible separation". In "society", the notion of personality applies only to the individual, the rest having the sense of a more or less constructed order; in "community", a supra-individual form of per-formity is asserted.

¹ Friedrich Everling was a contributor to the *Diorama filosofico* directed by Evola [Note by R.D.P.].

* Cf. Ferdinand Tönnies, *Communauté et société*, tr. fr., P.U.F., 1944; II^e ed.: Retz, 1977 (original edition: 1887). On Tönnies, see in particular Alain de Benoist, "Communauté" et "société", in *Eléments*, 23, Sept.-Nov. 1977, pp. 3-9 [N.D.T.].

sonnality, conceived not as an abstraction, but as a reality, prior in fact and in law to the personality of the individual.

Yet it is precisely in the form of "communities" that corporations, as *Stände*, are conceived by the new German ideology; consequently, as "supra-individual persons" determined by selection (when qualified by birth - *Geburtsstände*) or by the division of labor, endowed with an organic life of their own, and also with "honor" - the latter principle being precisely the subject of our reflections. To be precise, here is Everling's definition: "Corporations are a form of 'community' in which the active members of a nation are linked by the common purpose of their very activity.

As a result, the *Stand* is neither the "class" of yesterday's liberal or Marxist conceptions, nor even our corporation, in which the theorists in question would tend to see a form of "society" rather than "community", since it is not so much an immediate and traditional form of existence as a higher, ordering and harmonizing principle of production and work on a union-type basis. Clearly, what we're talking about here is a revival of the medieval organic concept of the corporation, as confirmed by the new German labor legislation, which rejects the trade-union element, thus eliminating the socialist parenthesis, and seeks to restore to the company its lost unity, in the form of solidarity between the bosses - who correspond to the old "Masters" - and their followers, the workers. But here, too, we see the ambiguity, or at least the problematic aspect, of the corporation as *Stand* in practical terms, i.e. in the context of modern living conditions, production and economy: to be coherent, the corporation would have to identify itself with a kind of caste, and be nourished essentially by principles of an ethical nature, of course, but such, too, that only a tra-

dition transmitted by blood could give them direct evidence, authority and power. On this point, it is clear that those who defend such conceptions expect a great deal from the contribution that putting racism into practice will make to the new organization of the German nation, i.e., from the results of legislation on hygiene and racial purity. Indeed, "blood and honor" is one of the most frequently used watchwords in this field. However, we can observe that we are implicitly led to believe that "communities" that do not yet exist or have disappeared, can be born or reborn on the basis of measures that, at least initially, can only be "social" - the two words being understood in Tönnies's aforementioned sense. In fact, all measures of social organization, including blood laws and honor-based provisions, cannot fail to appear, at least initially, as measures and laws formulated on the basis of ideas and principles that would be vainly sought in factual situations and in traditions that are more or less alive. The hope is that, as in the case of artificial incubation, a new form of existence will emerge. As far as the success of the experiment is concerned, it's difficult to form an opinion one way or the other, since, on a general level, we'll have to see to what extent we'll be able to set clear-cut limits to modes of life and production, to a contemporary mentality that holds sway, including in Germany, and which is diametrically opposed to any traditional attitude.

An initial divergence from traditional thinking can be seen in the fact that the new concept does not envisage a hierarchy of "guilds", but simply a hierarchy *within* "guilds". Commenting on the new German legislation, Frauendorser writes: "The guilds find themselves-

They therefore constitute a horizontal subdivision of the nation, while internally, each is organized vertically". This is 1 "equality before work conceived as a service", a principle which is also in force in Italy, where, similarly, no real hierarchy of the various guilds has been established, with precise relationships of rank and subordination, depending on the quality of the particular forms of activity.

As outlined by Everling, the German concept of corporate subdivision is essentially tripartite: political organization, culture, economy. The former corresponds to the organs of the state, i.e. the army and the "corporation" of civil servants. The cultural domain extends from the forms of national religious activity to the liberal professions. The economic sphere includes first and foremost the agricultural guild, followed by the sectors grouped together in the Reich Chamber of Economics (industry, crafts, trade, banking, insurance, energy). The aim is to reduce all these subdivisions to as many organic forms, entities corresponding to very specific modes, not only of activity, but also of life, whose common denominator is an ethical principle, that of *Corporate Honor*, which must be expressed in as many specific forms under the protection of as many corporate provisions, codes and tribunals.

Everling focuses his attention on professional guilds, which he defines as "partial units, whose members are bound by a common way of life expressed in a common corporate honor" (p. 22). Within this framework, Everling's revival of soundly traditional concepts is clearly visible. For example, he warns from the outset that the profession must correspond to effective personality training: it must prepare and complete this training, rather than being a mere utilitarian skill, cut off from the world of work.

to be specific to the person exercising it. "In this way, the organic concept avoids the danger of becoming collectivist. The organic conception is not, in itself, an enemy of personality: quite the contrary. It calls for the total fulfillment of personality, but as a function of the whole. To achieve this, the individual needs to be in touch with *tradition*, conceived as a form of activity but also of life, specific to a given professional guild, in which the individual must be able to recognize his own vocation and mode of being, and which he must therefore make his own.

Once you've joined a corporation, you'll find a differentiation and a plurality of degrees, which must not refer to purely materialistic elements, but also consider, as a datum as essential as any other, the value of personality. Everling rightly observes that rank, at present, ends up being positively determined by the amount of pay - whether honorarium or salary - and many people joke about what amounts, for them, to a "hollow title". Although Everling doesn't specify the exact criterion, his idea of a "corporate" dignity and ranks that have value in themselves, founded on the virtues of service, honor and loyalty, alien to any self-interested or material motivation - this idea seems to us worthy of attention. To achieve, in all fields, the construction of an authority and power that are, so to speak, ascetic, and not susceptible to being defined by what can be bought, sold or earned, seems to us to be the imprescriptible task of all reconstruction.

In the context of the aforementioned notion of lifestyles and actions in which we recognize ourselves and take pride, professional "guilds" obviously make "honor" a fundamental principle. Everling gives the following definition: "Honor expresses the value of a person in a given environment, a value that is measured in terms of what that person represents

for this environment, i.e. his qualification and the fulfillment of his duty". From such a definition flow a number of considerations aimed at elevating honor to the rank, not of a mere sentiment, but of a normative principle giving rise to *sui generis* legislation. This is where organic aspirations find their way into law. The two basic principles on which the social order rests - morality and law - need to be better articulated. Basically, these principles are concerned with the private person as an isolated individual in the face of abstract general norms: rights, duties and responsibilities are things that an individual must have at his or her disposal, including in a more differentiated and concrete framework, directly linked to the professional manifestations of his or her personality, which must always be underpinned by an ethical principle and a "value". This gives rise to the idea of a series of interlocking legal instances, ranging from the universal to the particular, and correlative to as many differentiations of the very notion of honor. At the top, human honor in general, with its own specific requirements; then, the honor of being a civilized man; then racial, national, family, professional honor, the honor of the sex to which one belongs and, finally, the honor of rank, which must be interpreted as inherent to the particular position occupied by the individual within the professional corporation of which he is a member. The principle of "*Noblesse oblige*"* should apply to each of these degrees, and determine qualifications and disqualifications accordingly. That these different areas of honor do not always form concentric circles, and that consequently the various standards of honor can only partially overlap and interlock harmoniously, Everling acknowledges sincerely: he foresees ten-

♦ In French in the text [N.D.T.].

sions and conflicts, but believes that they will be all the less serious and insurmountable the more institutions conform to a genuine organic principle.

In this respect, there is one principle that differentiates the new corporate system from the medieval one: the corporation is not opposed to the state, but has a higher sense of honor insofar as it sees itself as an organic part of the national "community". The spirit of the corporation must be such that everyone feels proud of the one of which he is a member and considers it, in a way, the most important of all; the presence and effectiveness of a higher principle of loyalty, however, prevents the development of particularisms or "centrifugal" tendencies. Everling also alludes to the constitutional guarantees needed to satisfy this aspiration. We know, moreover, that in the new German labor legislation, companies, constituted as so many feudal units, have councils which must include a manager directly appointed by the State, a manager who exercises to some extent a liaison and control function based on a political principle of national interest, which corresponds to the function also existing in Italian corporations.

Everling repeatedly insists on the professional guild as a way of life: membership must correspond to a kind of *character indelebilis*, so that rank and honor must be retained by individuals, even when they cease to exercise an effective activity - in the way that rank and a certain lifestyle, a certain behavior, remain attached to the true officer even when he no longer lends service. The code of honor of each guild will therefore assert its requirements and decree its sanctions with regard to active members, but also inactive ones, those who no longer practice their profession.

For this code, the principle of *nullum crimen sine lege* has no place; this code calls for the principle of *nullum crimen sine poena*. It cannot, in fact, be a law

This criterion must be examined not only in terms of the individual's professional activity, but also in terms of his or her life as a whole. This is almost always a *delictum innominatum*, which can only be established by *tradition*, not by definition. So it's less a question of a code than of a particular sensibility, which mirrors the ethical level of a corporation at a given moment. Honor therefore differs not only from one corporation to another, but also from one era to another, and it is tradition that must safeguard it. The older and more closed a professional guild is," writes Everling, "the less it needs casuistic prescriptions to meet the demands of its own honor. And the closer a guild is to political power, the greater its autonomy, the more typical its way of life - the more stringent the demands of its honor".

As for the legal aspect, each corporation will have its own court of honor, concerned with the education of its members and the protection of its purity. Its measures will therefore be both corrective and purifying, and will be limited to the perpetual expulsion of the guilty member from the corporation. Because of the concentric nature of the various legal frameworks and domains of honor discussed above, should the act or fault also fall under the rigors of a broader law, such as criminal law, the judgment of the court of honor would take precedence over any other judgment, and the culprit would only be the subject of further judgment as a degraded, disqualified and excluded member of the guild.

In today's Germany, there is a growing trend to introduce *Vethics* into criminal law, by reducing the various offences to variants of a single offence, generically defined as "*infidelity*" - *Veruntreuung* - or "*unfaithfulness*" - *Veruntreuung*.

honor. This is another effect of the general organic-idealistic conception. Legislation for the reintegration of the peasantry, which once again requires the peasant to enter into a kind of feudal commitment and to be fully qualified for his position, on pain of sanctions that can go as far as expropriation; racial legislation, which punishes marriage or even simple sexual union with Jews or people of color as a crime of treason against the order of the race - are all manifestations, in Germany, of the same tendency. So much so that everything Everling describes is certainly influenced by concrete aspirations, already satisfied in many areas - for example, in the "corporation" of army civil servants - through solid institutions.

It's not hard to see that trends of this kind have some real value, if we compare them with the anonymous, mechanical, anodyne, abstractly legal and rationalist nature of political and social life in the most recent West. But the ultimate, *spiritual* meaning of reforms of this kind - their absolute meaning, not their relative, political and social significance - remains, even today, rather problematic in the current state of affairs in Germany.

In Everling's case, the uncertainty is easy to dispel, since he is a pure traditionalist who makes no secret of the fact that he owes so much to the aristocratic ideals of the old imperial Germany of the Roman-German Middle Ages. The same cannot be said of other representatives of the German revolution, who all too often, in their drive towards the future, end up forgetting the creative word that can come from the past, and insist on rather suspect "social" aspirations.

Indeed, when an entire system wants to justify itself and base itself on the essentially spiritual act of pride, of which a sense of honour is the consequence, the

The spiritual value of the whole ends up being measured in terms of what, in this ideal, serves as the supreme and exclusive point of reference at the center of the hierarchy and of the overall system of dependency relationships.

In the Middle Ages, this hierarchy of dependencies had a clear meaning: as a general rule, we passed from the loyalty of the peasant and the craftsman to the loyalty of the nobility, the feudal lord, the prince of a nation, up to an immaterial loyalty granted to the suprapolitical and universal authority of the Empire. Today, the hierarchical chain is already half broken, and what remains is dissolving into uncertainty. But, by the same token, it is the inviolable and absolute nature of the bond of fidelity that is seriously undermined, the basis of this inviolability being of a purely spiritual order, given, uniquely, by supreme principles. However noble and legitimate they may be on their own level, the political and social myths of a people cannot possess this value of supreme spiritual principles, and can therefore provide no solid guarantee that the organic conception will not degenerate, at some point, into a more or less collectivist conception, ending up inverting in its opposite pole its original, spiritualist and personalist requirement. In fact, the principle of free personality and that of its virile subordination in the name of "loyalty", can only coexist and complement each other in turn by reference to spirit and tradition, understood in a higher, aristocratic and transcendent sense.

That's why these new concepts are, for the moment, even in their ethical and legal aspects, interesting from a theoretical point of view. From a practical and, at the same time, spiritual point of view, any judgment is premature. It could be a good old wine in new wineskins - a traditional renaissance - or a dubious new wine trying to ennoble and sell itself in the old wineskins of a noble tradition. Before deciding which is the case, we must wait for the transformation to pass from the

It will then be easy to understand the spiritual significance of this life, and therefore also of what has evoked it and made it possible beyond a world in crisis. It will then be easy to understand the spiritual significance of this life, and therefore also of what has evoked it and made it propitious beyond a
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1938

**ETHICAL VALUE
OF AUTARCIE**

In our time, it often happens that the force of circumstances and "positive causes" - the latter being held in such high regard in many circles - end up provoking situations which, on the surface, derive their meaning only from themselves, but which, to a more acute eye, are likely to embody a higher value too, and so rise above the order of pure contingency.

We used the word "likely" quite intentionally, to indicate the "possibility" rather than the "necessity" of this higher meaning. There are many cases in which fate offers us something, without our realizing it and without our knowing how to take advantage of it. And in other equally numerous cases, whether in individual or collective existence, the force of things acts like the breeder who, while having a genuine affection for a new horse, was forced to whip it regularly, because the latter didn't understand him, diligently completing all the parts of the exercise, but always stopping before the last obstacle, which it could easily have overcome, with a little effort, if it had understood. At a time when

is hypnotically fixed on the material plane, that of "positive reality", painful cases of this kind occur very frequently: we receive "blows" from all sides, without succeeding in *understanding* and following the right direction. The "lessons of experience" serve to laboriously accumulate facts, to relate them to each other in various ways according to our practical goals; they don't serve to make us grasp a *meaning*, *they don't* serve to *wake us up* and lead us, awake, towards the right reaction.

The famous phrase: "*reconomy is our destiny*", is but the sad sign of an era, unfortunately not yet entirely extinct. An obvious fallacy in any normal period of history and civilization, this principle *became* true once man had destroyed, one after the other, all the traditional values and higher points of reference that had previously governed his decisions and actions. The omnipotence of the economy is merely a sign of abdication, just as, in hypnotic phenomena, the omnipotence of psychophysical automatisms presupposes the suspension of conscious faculties and, in general, of the personality.

Naturally, this principle, as a formula, has been overcome today, at least among right-wing currents. In Mussolini's words, "Fascism still believes in acts where no economic motive, near or far, intervenes", and refuses to accept that economic developments alone, to the exclusion of all other factors, are sufficient to explain all history. Another well-known formula states that recognition of the power of the economy must go hand in hand with this: man is not the *object*, but the *subject* of the economy. All this is obvious, intuitive and natural. It's the opposite view that has all the hallmarks of a genuine ideological anomaly.

In theory, that is. In practice, unfortunate things-

But, as Goethe warned us, "the spirits you evoke won't go away so easily". So, while on the one hand we can only condemn the principles of idealistic renewal, on the other we are often forced to take account of very specific practical necessities, and this is an equally sacred commitment for anyone who does not want to cut his nation off from reality and lead it, in the short term, to ruin. The most tragic aspect of such a dualism is that it can degenerate into a veritable antinomy: we are sometimes obliged to momentarily silence the idea, or to make it wait, in the name of economic, financial and commercial forces demanded by the nation's most fundamental interests. Idea and reality don't always run parallel in contemporary politics: it's a matter of indifference when the idea is a mere simulacrum, a mere myth, subordinate to Mammon; a serious matter, on the other hand, when it really is an idea.

Anyone looking back over the last few years will be convinced that *Vautarcie*, rather than a principle, is the necessary consequence of a certain general political and economic situation. For many people, it still represents a scandal, the most irrational thing imaginable: rationality being seen, by these people, in the "division of labor", in an exchange with a sufficient margin of freedom, based on an equalization of customs. It's absurd, we're told, to set up from the outset a system in which some people are obliged to imagine all kinds of resources and tighten their belts to live "autarkically", while others are hit by their very wealth. It follows that autarky is seen as a "creature of necessity", determined by the violent and intentional intervention of politics in the economy.

The ease with which such a viewpoint, with its unmistakable materialistic overtones, can be overturned is, in truth, astonishing. Indeed, one wonders whether the

The system opposed to autarky, the one deemed free, would be "rational" and "sensible", and would be none other than the system where the brute fact of a certain superior economic power of a few peoples - a power based, above all, on the possession of raw materials - would enclose other peoples in the unbreakable net of passive dependence, precisely through the "fatality" and "rationality" of the "normal" economic process. From a higher point of view, this would be exactly the most repugnant of illogicalities; a subjugation more brutal than that of any personalized tyranny.

The peoples who refuse to allow themselves to be caught up in the cogs and wheels of such a system, and who have adopted autarky as their principle, are peoples who have already awakened to something spiritual, peoples who are sensitive to values that are not purely reducible to those of the belly and what depends on it: and this is already the beginning of a liberation. If it is necessity that has brought them to this situation (and we must also include in necessity everything that has to do with political realism alone), we must recognize that necessity, in this case, has fulfilled precisely that providential function we spoke of at the beginning, and that all it takes is one more step to rise, through a just reaction, to an effectively spiritual consciousness.

Etymologically, "autarky" means "having one's own principle within oneself". The ancients said that only he who has his own principle within himself is free. The whole question revolves around the *meaning* of this freedom. The current interpretations are well known: they are based on the financial domain, on the one hand, and the military domain, on the other. Economic autarky guarantees us a margin of freedom with regard to monetary policy, enabling us to set and defend our currency. Without economic independence, the conduct of modern warfare is severely compromised, amounting to something akin to a game of chance that succeeds in the short term.

The technical and military equipment required for modern warfare is not self-sustaining, even if we disregard the possibility of a blockade.

These are two excellent reasons. But the third, and in our opinion the most important, is overlooked. Autarky has the value of a principle, in the highest sense of the word, because it is the *conditio sine qua non* of a freedom of alliances and enmities on a basis that is not materialistic (realistic), but ethical. It is obvious that the more a nation succeeds in living in economic autarky, the more it will be able to follow an idea, or even an ideal, in all its foreign policy; in other words, the greater its ability to designate friend or foe regardless of the most trivial occasion or the most brutal necessity. Autarkic nations would thus be the only ones able to form fronts justified by true principles, by ideal and spiritual affinities, rather than by a simple and changing convergence of interests. One thing, of course, does not exclude the other, and the ideal condition would unquestionably be reached if the two plans were to coincide. In all cases of imperfect coincidence, unlike the devious epoch of materialism and economism, from which we are in the process of extricating ourselves, and which was characterized by a cynical, cold and immediate subordination of the idea to the interest, the new epoch, if it is not to betray itself, and if it is to truly deserve to be called new, will be characterized by the opposite principle, i.e. by an *active* decision by nations, a decision coming from above, on the basis of the possibilities of independence and mobility that derive from the maximum degree of autarky sensibly achievable in each of them.

The day we achieve this, the *positive* side of autarky will become fully apparent. And if, at first, this principle was practically imposed on us from the outside, requiring effort and discipline, the new

aKK-study will enable us to judge the matter from a very different >ue: the coercion exerted by "history" will be understood as the only means available to give a higher instinct, as yet uncons- CUMH of itself, a first sense of the right direction.

IV

1940

THE LIMITS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

"As Lenin saw it, mankind was divided into two species by a horizontal plane: the exploiters or satiated and the exploited or disinherited. The only reason for this separation lay in the womb, and there was no room for the spirit, no divine or satanic inspiration (...) Lenin's specifically materialistic and Darwinist error was to have ignored the fact that, while the human body is the brother of the beasts, the soul, of which he wanted to know nothing, is the sister of good or evil angels. Because of this, in contrast to what happens in the animal world, and in accordance with what Scripture implies, the spiritual element has primacy, and what truly divides Adam's posterity since Cain and Abel is not the struggle for life or the class struggle, but the war of good and bad angels that has been going on since the beginning and will continue unremittingly until the consummation of the centuries".

These sentences by Count Emmanuel Malynski, if we put

¹ Emmanuel Malynski-Léon de Poncins, *La guerre occulte*, Beauchesne, Paris, 1936; quotation from the non-commercial edition: Paris, 1940, p. 239-240 [N.D.T.].

apart from their mystical side, deserve to be meditated upon, not only to penetrate the essence of Judeo-Communist materialism, but also to "rectify" tendencies which, opportunely masked, often appear in theories and movements of an entirely different type.

There's too much talk, for example, of "social justice", and few people have the courage to highlight the disparate and often contraband content that this formula possesses in different cases. That "justice", along with "freedom", is one of the most abused terms in democratic jargon, for the purpose - and purpose only - of subverting and establishing new and worse forms of tyranny (as the "dictatorship" of the proletariat teaches), is common knowledge, and something that should give us pause for thought. Let's not delude ourselves: for a long time now, wherever "justice" is spoken of, it is not *Vaequitas*, but *Vaequalitas* that is meant: not true justice, expressed by the classic Roman principle *suum cuique*, to each his due - naturally, according to differences in nature, dignity and function, but the opposite, the prevaricatory claim that everything should be placed in equal measure at the disposal of all.

But, as we've already said, egalitarianism is merely a transitional phase and an instrument of subversion: it serves to smooth the way. Once the foundations of a previous hierarchical order have been destroyed in the name of "justice", once the barriers have been eliminated, another order is formed, which is the counterfeit and inversion of the first, like a pyramid whose point is at the bottom. In addition to what has already been said about the "dictatorship of the proletariat", expressing a power that has in no way been "socialized" but has become the monopoly of the lowest strata, the case of Judaism is eloquent. The Jew, too, demanded and obtained emancipation in the name of "justice" and "equality". Once free, far from assimilating and working on an "equal footing" alongside the non-Jew, he passed on his back and, in many cases, occupied the same position as the non-Jew.

In many countries, the most important social, political and cultural command posts are held, albeit invisibly.

In any case, it's easy to see that, even in the most favorable cases, the formula of "social justice" has undeniable connections with the Marxist materialist premises denounced by Malynski in the excerpt quoted above. Of course, it is right - right in the human sense and in the most elementary mode - that no one should go hungry, while others should be fed and satiated by the product of their labor. But it's hard to imagine that those who aim to realize such demands don't have another ideology of their own, unacknowledged and all the more important for them: the mass will to conquer envied positions, to seize the same goods, despised in the person of another class, but coveted, considered just as essential and decisive.

There has been much talk, precisely in connection with the "social justice" formula, of "deproletarianizing" the worker and the peasant. But this is almost always the wrong approach. The real "deproletarianization" would consist in leading the worker and the peasant back to themselves, detoxifying them from the envy, thirst, ambitions and artificial, unnatural needs aroused in them by classist ideology. This would be tantamount to helping them regain their paths and the dignity of their functions within the whole of a well-differentiated hierarchical organism. On the contrary, in many cases, social justice consists in welcoming - sometimes out of fear, sometimes out of unconsciousness, sometimes out of compromise - the anti-national and "modern" aspirations inoculated into the masses by socialism and similar subversive ideologies: "deproletarianization" then means helping the working masses to "gentrify", to achieve as far as possible a "bourgeois" standard of living, with its conveniences, distractions, mediocrity - not to say outright spiritual flatness. The bourgeoisie is on trial,

but it's so that the proletariat can itself become bourgeoisie, so that it adopts, inevitably, the very flaws and vices of the bourgeoisie².

The spiritual factor doesn't come into it at all. Wages, empty or full stomachs, "right" or "wrong" in terms of matter and economics - these are the only factors involved. And today, it's very difficult to conceive of what was considered normal in earlier times: that wealth and power have nothing to do with values and superiority; and since the former do not create the latter, neither do they destroy or compromise them. It's a fact, moreover, that the "deproletarianized", gentrified, urban element of Central Europe, despite its outwardly "civil" veneer, its pervasive impertinence, its awareness of its "rights" and "social function", represents a distinctly inferior human type, from the point of view of character and inner values, to the Tyrolean craftsman, the Calabrian peasant, the Sardinian or Hungarian shepherd, whatever their indigence and often sad conditions of life and culture, whatever their weak desire to "elevate themselves". These people are still men, and are rarely mistaken in their judgment of who is different from them and truly superior to them. The others are human sawdust, a shapeless element, both impertinent and cumbersome.

It would therefore be advisable not to play with ambiguous formulas and to call everything by its proper name. Even in the context of polemics against the bourgeoisie, the essential point has almost always been overlooked: reference to the values and motivations that transcend the bourgeoisie.

² On this subject, Werner Sombart's works are worth consulting, especially *Les Juifs et la vie économique*, Payot, Paris, 1923; *Le bourgeois*, Payot, 1928 (since then, revised and updated edition in the "Petite Bibliothèque Payot"); *Le socialisme allemand*, Payot, Paris, 1938 [N.D.L.E].

the economic sphere, and in favor of which fascism has explicitly declared itself. Reaching out to the people, social justice, the anti-bourgeoisie, etc., must not serve to circulate elites in the most banal parochial sense, that of one class passing over the back of another, replacing it, while losing its original and natural qualities to acquire all the characteristics and vices of the other class.

And we need to be even more cautious when talking about "social justice" on an international level, so that the same equivocation doesn't recur, and so that, once again, materialistic motivation doesn't come to constitute *Vultima ratio*. The right of peoples who "have no space" is a human right. But let's not confuse things, let's not confuse one right with another, and let's not reduce the dialectic of nations to an exchange, *mutatis mutandis*, of roles. Neither the fact of having more, nor *a fortiori* the fact of not having or having little, is a legitimate title to power and supremacy, either in the order of a particular race or in the order of a group of races.

The only legitimate title for power and supremacy is superiority.

V

1940

TRIAL OF THE BOURGEOISIE

There has been so much polemic about the bourgeoisie in recent times, that the idea of a survey on the subject, in order to arrive at something solid and conclusive, must surely be considered opportune. This is the aim of a recently published work entitled *Processo alla Borghesia*ⁱ, which brings together a series of essays by various authors, mainly edited by Edgardo Sulis. We'll see what it's all about, and to what extent the conclusions of this investigation are acceptable. But we must point out that, even in the case of these authors, who do not belong to the *cliques** of the "official" third pages**, an "individualistic" way of proceeding, unfortunately typical of our culture, is confirmed: we mean that each one takes a position according to his or her own convictions and views, instead of there being a collective work, taking up the results obtained by those who have already carried out certain research, either to criticize these results and show that they are "wrong" or "wrong".

i Edizioni di Roma, 1939-XVIII.

♦ In French in the text [N.D.T.].

** In Italian dailies, the third page is always devoted to "cultural" issues.

or to develop them and take them further in a constructive way. This has been and still is the case, for example, with the problem of race or the Jewish question; and it applies, once again, to the polemic about the bourgeoisie. As a simple example, we'd like to point out that, for a long time now, both in these columns² and in *Regime Fascista*³, we've had the opportunity to provide elements of a traditional order that can facilitate a sure orientation for, precisely, the problem of the bourgeoisie and its overcoming. But it's as if this hadn't been written, in the sense that on this point too everyone goes their own way, without bothering, in the field under discussion, about what has already been specified or, at least, prepared.

Returning to the book, let's say it begins with an "identification of the accused", who would be the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is defined as "enemy no. 1 of the fascist revolution", leaving room for the legitimate question of whether Bolshevism and Communism, which until recently held this honorary title, have lost it, and since when. It's true that several of the book's contributors establish a certain link between bourgeoisie and Marxism. The distinction, however, remains and must remain: communism is the final and conclusive phase of the evil of which bourgeois culture was a preliminary stage or less acute form. In nations where Bolshevism is no longer a domestic danger, the title of Enemy No. 1 can certainly pass to the bourgeoisie: but, especially in internationally uncertain times such as the present, care must be taken not to confuse, to the extent of

²That is, in the monthly *La Vita Italiana* [Note by R.D.P.].

³Cf., for example, Evola's article *Il nostro fronte antiborghese*, published on April 3, 1934; reprinted in the anthology *Diorama filosofico. Problemi dello spirito nell'etica fascista*, vol. I, 1934-35, Europa Rome 1974, pp. 39-42 [Note by R.D.P.].

believe, for example, that in some cases the fight against Bolshevik nations can be neglected because it's more important to bring down bourgeois-democratic nations.

In the identification of the accused, the bourgeoisie is said to be "the daughter of Luther and the French Revolution". This is true, but incomplete. We would gladly add the Communes to the list of paternity, for therein lies the most obvious beginning of the evil whose ultimate consequences we are suffering today. We are therefore surprised that none of the volume's authors have alluded to this point. Should we attribute this to the lingering prejudice of this "national history" of purely Masonic manufacture, which sees in the advent and revolt of the Communes a national episode, and not a pure phenomenon of anti-traditional subversion, having nothing to do with a homeland? By neglecting this point, the book's authors miss the best points of reference for the problem: for once you define the bourgeoisie as "anti-aristocracy", economism and rationalism, it's in vain to arrive at precise ideas, if you don't refer to the aristocratic-feudal, anti-humanist, ascetic and warlike type of civilization of which the Communes represented precisely the clearest antithesis.

Let's turn now to the first essay, by Sulis: here, the most accurate idea is that the bourgeoisie is born when feudal aristocracy declines, and that what already meant decadence for the aristocrat becomes ideal for the bourgeois. In this last respect, the author is thinking above all of economic values, property and wealth, which are going to supplant the true and legitimate forms of power and be accompanied by an anodyne, impersonal system, capable of guaranteeing pre-eminence and influence without the need to assume any risk or responsibility. On the one hand, the economy has become the fundamental force of existence; on the other, the "convenient life", guaranteed by "constitutions" and laws that are always sufficiently flexible for the bourgeoisie to act and develop.

lop off its parasitic, or at least sedentary, activity without being exposed to danger.

Sulis's presentation is correct, as is his observation that Marxism basically fights the bourgeoisie only to take its place, the type of aspirations and ideal of the worker now being bourgeois - to the point where Sulis goes so far as to say that today there is only the bourgeoisie, in the dual form of the property-owning bourgeoisie and the proletarian bourgeoisie. But the author starts to stumble as soon as he talks about the notions of "class" and "people", and when he studies antidotes. "Fascism will bury the notion of class by driving the bourgeoisie back into the people, unlike democracy, which drove the people back into the bourgeoisie (...).) You can't fight the bourgeois if you haven't first changed the system that is bourgeois, if you haven't first opposed the bourgeoisie with an aristocracy that conquers its means, to give them back the public character they were stripped of, if you haven't first sent the bourgeois class back to the people where it was born and to which it must return". Once the bourgeois class has been dissolved back into the people, according to Sulis, a new aristocracy will emerge from the people, aware of its political responsibility and exercising a public function.

It's all a bit confusing. As with Mussolini, for us too, the "people" is a "mysterious entity" that we don't believe in at all, it's just a word in the jargon of demagogic agitators; in reality, either the people is a passive substance that belongs to those who know how to take it, or it is the final phase of a process of social disintegration and levelling. To speak of "classes" in relation to "the people", both to deny and to affirm them, is to succumb, even unwittingly, to the Marxist mentality. Classes are nothing but the degenerate by-products of those very different things that were, in the traditional world, castes or similar articulations, determined not artificially- but by their very nature.

lement, but by the difference in nature, dignity and function of beings. To think of abolishing classes and simply leaving the binomial "people and rulers" in place, is not to go beyond the collectivist level of the popular tyrannies and tribunes of Antiquity. Aristocracy only makes sense in an *articulated* social system, where it occupies its rightful place, within all the other degrees. It's not a question of dissolving the bourgeoisie into the mass, but of forcing it to take its rightful place in a normal social organization, by preventing any inclination towards prevarication and any hypertrophic, parasitic development. In ancient Aryan societies, the bourgeoisie carried out its normal activity as a social stratum superior to that of ordinary workers, but in turn, it was subject to the warrior aristocracy and, beyond this, to the representatives of pure spiritual authority. Sulis writes: "Which aristocracy will be expressed by the people? It's easy to predict. It is the aristocracy of intelligence that will be expressed, that is, the aristocracy of absolute superiority over all other men". Words can be misleading, but we fear that Sulis, who considers intellectualism a bourgeois attribute, is the victim of a bourgeois ideal. What is the "aristocracy of intelligence", if not the most typical of all anti-aristocratic ideals? Historically, it has been precisely the bourgeoisie's substitute for the ascetic and warrior ideals that defined the castes to which it would normally be subordinated and subjugated. Sulis, moreover, speaks of "new and whole men" guiding the people against the bourgeois class. Frankly, none of this can lead beyond a mixture of humanism (remember the infamous humanist type of the *condottieri*) and Bolshevism.

In the volume's second essay, Berto Ricci⁴, while still

⁴ From Berto Ricci, one of the best representatives of the "young"
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reaffirming his "anti-classist" tendencies, takes it upon himself to refute this idea of "the people", the importance of which we saw in the first article. "When pointing out the shortcomings and faults of the bourgeoisie, we must not fall into the deification of the people" - Ricci rightly writes, showing how many divergent meanings this abused word possesses. Ricci sees the bourgeoisie as a category of the mind, a mentality, rather than a class: "Not wealth, but conduct, no longer occupation, but lifestyle, the use of oneself and one's own means". "The bourgeois is in us, in each one of us, with his renunciations and ambitions, his way of quibbling and doubting, his particularism as an individual, a family, a class, his thirst for wealth, his fear - above all - of poverty; his fear of courage; his piquet of habits; his lukewarm shower of arrangements; his foreignness to physical life and to what civilized man needs of nature if civilization is not to deform into the most petty barbarism". We can agree with all this, even if we remain here within a rather generic framework. The discourse becomes more concrete when the author turns to the question of measures to be taken. Ricci declares that it is essential to the anti-bourgeois struggle to dethrone wealth, to ensure that social hierarchy no longer consists of economic privilege: "Above all, give people the feeling that wealth is not everything, or even much. But for this to happen, private wealth must be worth little; it must serve little purpose; little must be obtained with it, both in the order of material goods and in terms of authority over men".

Ricci makes another apt observation when he asserts that it is not capitalism as a whole that is bour-

generation of "imperial" fascism, contributor to *Popolo d'Italia*, member of the School of Fascist Mysticism (he took part in the 1940 colloquium organized by the latter), who died a hero in the Second World War, Volpe published *Prose e ritini* [Note by R.D.P.].

geoisie, since capitalism, in its classical period, had its own spirit of adventure and conquest. This is what Sombart⁵ has highlighted in his well-known work. But, once again, we can only really understand the meaning of this aspect of capitalism if we refer to the law of caste regression, to which we have so often drawn attention. These adventurous traits of the capitalist bourgeoisie derive, through economic degradation and reduction, from the values and spirit of the warrior aristocracy's caste and culture, and this happens when effective power passes from the latter to the next lower caste, the bourgeoisie.

Ricci's idea is echoed in the following essay by Icilio Petrone: "To call an American billionaire who risks a large part of his income on the stock market or in a perilous business absurd. Whatever this man's morals and adventures, he has nothing to do with bourgeois morals". The truth of this statement is clear from what we said above: the bourgeois element remains, because it is the plane of the economy, of economic action, that defines it; but, in the case in point, values are at work that have descended, by involution, from the higher, heroic and spiritual plane, to the bourgeois level and mode of being, i.e., essentially linked to the economy. Given that Petrone's essay begins with the formula "the bourgeoisie is an effect, not a cause", we're left a little hungry for an adequate investigation of what is the true cause of the bourgeoisie - that is, let's repeat, of the teratological growth of this bourgeoisie and the power it has usurped. As a particular observation, it's true that "to purify the air of the bourgeois mind, it's necessary to-".

s Cf. *Le bourgeois*, Payot, 1928 and note 2 of the previous article on *Les limites de la "justice sociale"* [Note by R.D.P.].

would sweep away I don't know how many bureaucratic superstructures of the modern world". But we do not agree with the solution proposed in this form: "The more freedom the fascist revolution grants to genius and intelligence, the more we will proceed, without even needing to shout it out, to the liquidation of the bourgeoisie". We repeat that "genius" and "intelligence" are themselves idols and superstitions of the bourgeois age, the watchwords of a civilization of *parvenus**. The bourgeoisie can only be overcome by going back to the world which, in the traditional hierarchical order, stands above the bourgeois: and this higher world is made up of warriors and ascetics, not of "geniuses" and intellectuals, both of whom are mere "humanist" appendages of a bourgeois-type civilization.

Roberto Pavese's essay⁶ is constructive on two points in particular: firstly, when he defines the bourgeoisie, which is the subject of today's polemic, as essentially a middle class, which brings together elements from below as well as the wrecked or shipwrecked from the upper classes, united together by the option for material goods, as well as by a typical, agnostic and rationalist mentality. "The bourgeoisie is a spiritual half-breed, the result of a cross between an aristocracy that has lost its sense of spiritual values and a plebeian class that has not yet acquired this sense. The second - and fundamental - point, which Pavese is the only one of the book's contributors to have emphasized, is that the bourgeoisie and its advent remain

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

⁶ The philosopher Roberto Pavese was a great friend of Evola's and a contributor to both *La Torre* and *Diorama filosofico*. In the complete reprint of the collection of the former magazine (*Il Falco*, Milan, 1977), cf. his article *Per una soluzione integrale del problema della morte delle razze*, pp. 193-197; in the partial edition of *Diorama* (1974), cf. his article *Problemi dei nostri tempi*, pp. 324-328 [Note by R.D.P.].

very closely linked to the modern worldview, determined essentially by the scientific myth. This is really the fundamental point. It was the vision of the world and of civilization that increasingly prevailed in the West from the Renaissance onwards - a desacralized, secular, materialist, positivist vision - that provoked the crisis of the previous heroic, spiritual and aristocratic civilization, and smoothed all the way for the social and intellectual bourgeoisie. But it's a pity that Pavese didn't develop this point adequately in his essay; some of his expressions could even be misleading. Such is the case, in our view, when Pavese, in the chapter on antidotes, speaks simply of "religiosity" and the need to "believe" - apart from the fact that "the touchstone of our race must no longer be gold, but iron, and even the steel of our daggers and our hearts". It's true that Pavese also evokes a "finalistic knowledge, a science that is also morality", to be contrasted with mechanical knowledge and rationalist, agnostic scientism; and we're well aware that, in his works, he tried to make a positive contribution to this new conception. However, we don't believe that we can get to the heart of the matter by synthesizing a philosophical system - even a finalistic one, fully and consciously dependent on the spiritual element - with "religion" as it is conceived in the West today. We agree with Guénon that it would be better to make a *tabula rasa* and ask ourselves the serious question of to what extent an effective return to the traditional spirit and worldview⁷ is still possible today.

Alberto Luchini's essay⁸ is well aware of the conditions

⁷ For the specific meaning of the word "traditional" used here, we refer the reader to Guénon's *La crise du monde moderne*, Bossard, Paris, 1927, or to our *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno*, Hoepli, Milan, 1934.

⁸ Alberto Luchini, head of the Office of Race at the Ministry for Popular Culture, well-versed in traditional sciences, had foreseen

necessary for an anti-bourgeois reaction. He rightly calls Mussolini's words "The credo of the bourgeois is egoism, the credo of the fascist is heroism" a "scalpel formula" - adding: "Bourgeois and anti-bourgeois are therefore only spiritual categories, and everything else is just a way of gargling. Without forgetting the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ on the great difficulties for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven". And also: "Either we act in the name of an empirical, precarious ego that could not be further from the truth. Or one acts in obedience to God's law. *Tertium non datur*". This clarification, which recalls the need for a transcendent point of reference, is very timely. Indeed, to speak *sic et simpliciter* of heroism is not enough: there are many ways of being a hero, and one can be a hero in the name of so many things. The "martyr" of subversive revolutions, the gangster who stands up to an entire group of police officers, the soldier who fights for the cause of democracy, the crusader, the fanatic of a savage tribe, etc., are all heroes. The question, then, is: what is the basis for the heroic capacity to sacrifice one's life immediately? It's only when a well-defined, transcendent point of reference is added to this, that heroism, from the profane that it was, so to speak, becomes sacred, and we really get in touch with the values that defined castes and higher civilizations, as opposed to bourgeois values.

in 1942, to found with Evola the review *Sangue e spirito*, which, however, never saw the light of day due to the hostility of certain Catholic circles, allied to representatives of the "materialist" racism then expressed in the review *La Difesa della Razza* (cf. J. Evola, *Le Chemin du Cinabre*, Archè-Arkto, Milan-Carmagnole, 1983, p. 153-154). Luchini also contributed to *Diorama filosofico* in the latter period of this initiative; see, for example, his articles *Razzismo giudaico, tedesco, italiano* (February 15, 1939), *Nascita e durata della "razza fascista"* (July 15, 1941), *Razza interna e diversità razziali esterne* (March 22, 1942) and *Contro l' "attesismo" antirazzista* (June 16, 1943) [Note by R.D.P.].

This awareness of the highest aspects of the anti-bourgeois problem is also expressed in Luchini's views on Bolshevism. He clearly sees that bourgeois decadence is a transitional phase which, in the continuity of the process of downfall and with the essential help of scientism, rationalism and atheism, leads fatally to the last degree, Bolshevism, the concrete and historical equivalent, for Luchini, of the reign of the Antichrist. Such is the limit of the involutive process, "the scientific organization of the revolt of the bottom against the top": we arrive at a degradation that, more than human, is diabolical. But we don't agree with Luchini's use of the word "people" and even of the expression "people's state" (to designate the fascist, anti-bourgeois state). It's true that he hastens to specify "popular in the Italian style, that is, popular in a totalitarian, organic, hierarchical and spiritual sense". But isn't this a misuse of language? Indeed, etymologically, *populus* designated the mass of participants in the political comices of Antiquity, or all the soldiers in certain meetings, as opposed to their way of presenting themselves in distinct formations, in other circumstances. So it's the "collectivity" aspect of a given group, as opposed to the same group when we're essentially considering differences, and therefore hierarchies too. We need to be aware of the trap secretly set by certain words, and refuse to make concessions to incompatible ideologies by retaining, albeit with changes in meaning, the terminology or, better still, the jargon.

Omero Valle's essay is interesting for its useful clarifications and the emphasis it places on traditional views. "In the Middle Ages, it was said: you are powerful, therefore you are rich. The age of the bourgeoisie reverses the positions: we say: you're rich? therefore, you're powerful. This apparent play on words contains a profound diversity of concepts. While the qualification "powerful" concentrates in itself spiritual, personal and inalienable values, such as

strength, audacity, valour, that of the rich identifies the elements constituting personality and superiority with something extrinsic to man's nature". And again: "The bourgeoisie is closed to faith, because the act of faith is a way of projecting oneself outside oneself, a sacrifice and self-sacrifice, if necessary, to ideal ends without first establishing the amount of one's personal income, without the great problem, the eternal haunting of the bourgeoisie: is it really worth doing this?". Faced with the classic dilemma of "your purse or your life", the bourgeois, paradoxically, would be the one to answer: "Take away my life, but leave me my purse". His insurmountable limit is "don't lose your feathers". The bourgeois is the anti-feudal, just as the feudal is the anti-bourgeois par excellence. "In the Middle Ages, the political leader did not at all accept to be the merchants' delegate-counsel.

Valle's observations on bourgeois idealist hypocrisy and the bourgeois work ethic are equally pertinent. On the former, he writes: "Marxism and historical materialism fell into the grave and naive error of openly declaring that they did not believe in historical values, including the value of the nation; the bourgeoisie immediately took advantage of this by crying foul and hiding its contraband under the label of ideals. This tactic, incidentally, has always paid off handsomely for the bourgeoisie. This is a very important point. The most dangerous bourgeoisie is precisely the hypocritically idealistic bourgeoisie, ready to seize on any ideal and exalt any "noble principle", including those of the fatherland, authority and order, so long as it can continue its little game or, at least, so long as it stays afloat. It has to be said again: it's this bourgeoisie that's the most dangerous for us, much more so than the bourgeoisie that presents itself unmasked, with its materialism and agnosticism. This bourgeoisie is the cancer that still afflicts our nation, and whose extirpation is a matter of urgency.

so difficult, due to the mimetic capacity of this class.

Valle goes on to denounce as bourgeois the much-vaunted "work ethic", whose plebeian and Protestant origins are hard to dispute. "The bourgeoisie has always sung the praises of work with a loud voice. It couldn't be any other way; as soon as the world is conceived as a purchase-sale relationship, those who have nothing to sell must give of themselves in the form of their activity, on pain of starvation. It's curious that the slogan "he who doesn't work doesn't eat" is today the exclusive possession of Bolshevism. It would have a thousand titles to be that of the bourgeoisie... It has always stamped the contempt for work of the aristocrat and the free wretch". But Valle rightly points out - as we did on another occasion - that the "work" of this bourgeois myth and mercantile ethic is to be despised only because it represents the degradation and materialization of higher forms of activity : whereas, in the traditional world, all work could take on the character of "action" in the sense of something selfless, personalized, creative, today or, better, in bourgeois-proletarian civilization, all action is debased into "work", that is, as Valle writes, "into a degrading effort, locked in the tragic circle of working to eat and eating to work, (which) becomes a pitiful slavery and remains on the plane of the biblical curse from which man will try in vain to free himself. And it is precisely in this form and figure that the bourgeoisie, in its innermost being, conceives of work... Buying and selling are the norm and the measure. The bourgeois hatred, the false disdain and the repressed envy of the bourgeois for the qualities of the aristocracy of the blood, combined with the hypocritical apology of work, are the fruit of the fundamental impossibility of buying an attribute that is inalienable by definition". Valle is thus effectively approaching a traditional point of view and courageously denouncing myths

which, unfortunately, still have some credence today.

As far as solutions are concerned, we agree with him that they don't have to be "Platonic". Indeed, proclaiming the renunciation of wealth, asceticism and the anti-market is precisely what the bourgeois would desire in order to continue to assert himself and to live quietly in opposition to it all, relegating the anti-bourgeois to the clouds of mysticism, idealism and poverty. "Money does not elevate human materiality, which grows vice versa with renunciation, so let me carry all this cross and blessed be you, you poor, for the Kingdom of Heaven awaits you. And all the while, he (the bourgeois) is thinking: Die, I'll fatten up, take care of myself, buy and sell as I please and when I please, because only the naive will believe your words. Behind my brand-name car, however I acquired it, there's a whole consideration". Starting from the idea that wealth is not a value, but an instrument, Valle argues that human freedom must equip itself with the instruments of its own realization and affirmation, and therefore also with the power of gold. It is therefore a question of reconstituting forms of power and authority that, while not based on wealth or justified by it, nevertheless exercise an unchallenged domination over all the processes that have come so close to making the economy a fatal and primary reality in human existence.

The last essay, by Federico Forni⁹, takes us back into the theoretical realm, as it deals with "bourgeois science". First and foremost, it confirms what we said earlier about the subordinate nature of everything "intellectual" in a traditional anti-bourgeois order. Forni recalls, for example, after

⁹ He took part in the National Colloquium of Fascist Mysticism (Milan, February 19-20, 1940) [Note by R.D.P.].

Sorel, that the function of philosophers in the salons of the Ancien Régime was similar to that of jesters in the Middle Ages, and that the relationship between Frederick II and Voltaire, when studied according to original documents, shows that the King of Prussia made little difference between an illustrious man of this type and a servant. It was precisely the bourgeoisie that created the myth of the aristocracy of thought, on an essentially rationalist and scientific basis, and the intellectual circles of the ^{eighteenth} century, inspired above all by Masonry, prepared the revolutions that were to give power definitively to the bourgeoisie. Forni points out, however, that the bourgeoisie, which emerged to concretize ideological abstractions in rigid schemes, was unable to resist the crisis of values, and that this was its tragedy. After the heyday of the cult of the goddess Reason, the religion of science, the great age of positivism and the negation of the supernatural, a period of crisis and reaction begins, ending with a loss of prestige for most of the previous rationalist and scientific idols. But when Forni considers only the positive aspect of this new stage, we cannot follow him. Indeed, most of the reactions in question, far from surpassing reason by referring to something truly superior to it, end up - through their irrationalist, voluntarist, naturalistic inclinations, through their worship of "life", of becoming, of instinct and feeling - on a plane even lower than that of reason : so that, in the majority of cases, they give rise to new processes of involution and dissolution, quite parallel to those which tend to "overcome" the bourgeoisie only to arrive at collectivism and Bolshevism.

So it's not enough to say that the bacchanalia of the goddess Reason has come to an end. The question is who will succeed her. In contemporary anti-rationalist reactionary movements, it's very difficult to find the distinction between the infrarational and the

suprarational: without this distinction, nothing positive can be achieved, and falls to an even lower level - despite all appearances - cannot be prevented. But we've already talked about all this, on several occasions.

The book's conclusion, which serves as the "verdict" in the case against the bourgeoisie, takes up just two and a half pages: it's rather inadequate and simplistic. It takes up the idea that the bourgeoisie should be sent back to the people: an erroneous idea, since the aim is, on the contrary, to make the bourgeoisie what it should be in a traditional hierarchical system: linked, supportive and subordinate to other distinct human nuclei, devoted to other activities, sometimes superior, sometimes inferior to those that define the bourgeoisie. The next demand is for the abolition of the Constitutions, the trench and wall of the bourgeois class and its anonymous power. This too is equivocal: the destruction of the Constitutions and, more generally, of all positive law, is also what subversion, anarchy and Bolshevism demand, as part of the same anti-bourgeois demand. For our part, we would propose a return to *jus singulare*. True, it is said that the abolition of constitutions should allow a true aristocracy to have a free hand, since it should also substitute the government of men for the administration of things, and subject economic processes to political will. Since it's Sulis who's speaking again, we must note once more the vagueness of his conception of aristocracy, understood, now, as "revolutionary intelligence". Let's repeat that it was essentially the encyclopedism of the XVlii' century that had this character. On the contrary, we should refer to the principles and the way in which traditional teaching defines all normal social organization: by clearly seeing the values on the basis of which the social body, now a shapeless, inarticulate mass, can once again acquire the traits of a superior organism, to the par-

It's only in this way that we'll be able to see how the various upper classes, whose decadence brought the bourgeoisie to power, can be reconstituted in very precise and even institutionally positive forms. Only under these conditions will we be able to get a true and definitive picture of the problem to which this book is dedicated.

VI

1940

MYTH AND REALITY IN THE ANTIBOURGEOIS STRUGGLE

When cultural-political polemics are fuelled by this or that slogan, we are all too often concerned only with their journalistic and intellectual aspects. Little attention is paid to examining the effects they have, not on those accustomed to cultural *routines** who, for various reasons, often personal taste or expediency, may judge one position to be more or less interesting than another, but on those who neither write nor intellectualize, and who look at reality with simplicity.

The same applies to the famous anti-bourgeois campaign. Apart from the poetic intellectuals themselves, Italian and Fascist circles were and still are interested, sensing the importance of problems of this kind for the new culture in the making: but when it comes to comparing "myth" with reality, these circles often end up perplexed.

In this regard, a confirmation comes from a series

♦ In French in the text [N.D.T.].

observations, accompanied by a request for clarification, sent to us by a squadriste. These are considerations that deserve to be examined outside a purely personal and private framework, so that we can realize the existence of certain states of mind, which, admittedly, are not felt by our correspondent alone.

By way of introduction, he wishes to emphasize that his perplexity does not concern the presentation of the anti-bourgeois problem from a traditional, aristocratic point of view - our correspondent declares himself to be in agreement with such an orientation and, more specifically, with our articles on this problem, which have appeared in these columns¹ or in *Regime Fascista*. For him, it's more a question of understanding, in the final analysis, "what the precise objective of the campaign is, in the political conception and intentions of the regime".

It is claimed that this campaign is directed against the bourgeoisie's materialistic conception of life. But then - observes our correspondent - the question is only apparently settled, because this conception of life is certainly not the exclusive possession of the bourgeoisie. While it undoubtedly emerged with the bourgeoisie, it is now widespread among the vast majority of the masses throughout the modern world, at least in the West. "Henceforth, therefore, the crusade should not be confined to the bourgeois front, but extended to nine-tenths of the nation, i.e. the masses. The campaign, on the contrary, seems to start from the untenable presupposition of a genuine opposition between the bourgeoisie and the masses. Indeed, who has ever reproached peasants or industrial workers for aspiring above all, like the bourgeoisie, to material well-being? Is there an essential difference between some, who dream of material pos-

¹That is, in the monthly *La Vita Italiana*. The article republished here, like the following one, was signed by Evola under the pseudonym *Arthos* [Note by R.D.P.].

And the others, who want larger, more fertile fields, lower taxes and higher wages?

It's not easy to dispute the accuracy of these remarks, and the logical consequence our correspondent draws from them: "Since, undeniably, the bourgeois mentality is equivalent to the predominance, in life, of materialistic aspirations, the minimum of coherence would be, rather than launching an anti-bourgeois campaign, to speak of the progressive gentrification of the nation, a phenomenon of fatal importance and which, although obvious, has never been the subject - it seems to me - of serious examination".

This is very true. Admittedly, we are still too much under the influence of the demoproletarian myth, which gratuitously attributes to the lower strata of a nation qualities that are not to be found in the higher strata: a remnant of Rousseauist naturalist optimism. But the course of recent history, and a study of the true meaning of world Marxism, show us that the truth is quite different. In most uprisings by "the people", in the sense of the lower classes as a whole, far from the assertion of the values of a healthier, more natural, fairer life, there is a phenomenon of resentment and envy: they don't want something different, they want to enjoy a similar standard of living and privileges. From the 18th century onwards, we're not witnessing a genuine revolt of the masses against the bourgeoisie, but the conquest of bourgeois positions by the masses, i.e., precisely their gentrification. Even when they are not, strictly speaking, red, Marxism and related movements, far from banking on the healthy, specific values that the people, unlike the sometimes corrupt higher classes, can sometimes retain, have been concerned with awakening in the people tendencies, needs, aspirations, ambi-

The result has been to generate all kinds of unrest and disorder, and in the best cases - when the movement has not encountered rigid obstacles - to enrich the ranks of the bourgeoisie by co-optation, to the point of implausibility.

Drawing on positive and convincing examples, our correspondent expresses the same idea: "Under the effect of the incessant rise in the standard of living of the masses, the possession and enjoyment of material goods have become the coveted objective of life for almost all the people, who were once content to be able to provide for the pure necessities of life. The desire and need to satisfy new needs, unknown in the past, means that increasing importance is attached to material well-being, as everyone sees that today only money allows the enjoyment of all these luxuries, which very few are now prepared to give up. Thus, this mentality, which was once a characteristic of the bourgeoisie, has taken hold of those who were not bourgeois, either by origin, vocation or economic conditions. And at the very moment when we declare war on the bourgeoisie, we see it absorbing the masses. For all those sons of peasants and workers who, over the last twenty years, have gradually attained higher living standards, becoming shopkeepers, tenderers, employees, or exercising liberal professions, etc., what are they then, if not new bourgeois? - What are they, then, if not new bourgeois? And they are, of course, with all the mental characteristics of the bourgeoisie: attachment to possessions and well-being, growing ambition to conquer higher and higher positions on the social ladder and, finally, to accumulate titles and honors - just like the old bourgeoisie. Or is this war only aimed at the old bourgeoisie? That wouldn't be fair. What difference could there be between the new and the old bourgeoisie? I can think of only one:

the one that separates the rich of yesteryear from the new rich".

We share this opinion. The growing well-being of the masses, produced everywhere by the incessantly invoked myth of "social justice", has inescapably led them to the bourgeois standard of living, habits and mentality - even in Soviet communism, did we not see people of very low extraction, as soon as they came to power, not only displaying the worst traits of the corrupt bourgeoisie they had so vituperated, but, from orgies to debauchery, leading the same type of life as that of a certain degenerate aristocracy? It's clear what we need to do, if we want to take things seriously: we need to destroy, by any means necessary, the suggestion of "progress", especially and precisely in its material and social aspects. This means reacting on two fundamental points: firstly, on the issue of overproduction, obviously driven by the capitalist mindset; secondly, on the issue of unnatural aspirations.

Overproduction wants the "progress" of "the people", i.e. it wants the needs that lead to the purchase of products to become natural and ineradicable in ever-wider layers within a nation; cooperating - in this as in so many other areas - with capitalism, Marxism and the various other "social" movements do everything, on their side, to make this happen: they inject the fad of "social justice" and "enlighten" the previously healthy class of workers. The anti-bourgeois campaign will remain mere chatter until we decide to act most energetically on these two points: on the one hand, by returning to the most rigid and controlled forms of an *autarkic consumer economy*; on the other, by detoxifying the masses, repressing the unnatural aspirations, needs and ambitions of the "proletariat" and related strata. But it would be very difficult to achieve the second objective without the help of two factors

other actions: firstly, to eliminate bad examples, motives for scandal and envy; secondly, to awaken *other* interests in the masses, beyond material interests; for you don't triumph over an aspiration by stifling it, but by confronting it with a different, stronger aspiration.

The first of these tasks refers us to other observations made by our correspondent. Having noted that the anti-Bourgeois campaign to date appears very one-sided, insofar as it is justified only by hostility to materialism, he wonders whether it is not, rather, a "manifestation of anti-plutocratic tendencies". And here we encounter inconsistencies that our correspondent, in all his fascist frankness, does not hesitate to denounce.

"What exactly is a plutocracy? If by plutocracy we mean a ruling class made up of wealthy people - as in the United States, France or England - it will not be necessary to demonstrate that we cannot speak of the existence of such a class in Fascist Italy". In this country, the direction of poetic life is now held by hands other than those of the plutocrats - and if, in some sectors, residual or new plutocratic formations existed, more or less masked, there would be reason - let's say it - not to polemicize, but to act, to act from above, to purify our hierarchies.

The political domination of rich people is not the issue here, so it's just a question of the *Vexistence* of rich people here. "With the anti-bourgeois campaign, war would be declared on the rich and on wealth itself. But by whom? Perhaps by the regime? I don't think so - writes our comrade. On the contrary, quite a lot of evidence suggests the opposite. Wealthy people, their tastes, demands and habits, are even taken into account. The sumptuous luxury of our superb transatlantic liners, the pride of the nation, to whom could-?

Is it intended for a plutocratic public? Or should we admit that our shipping companies were only thinking of pleasing foreign millionaires, whether English or American? And aren't the new luxury hotels - not to mention the existing ones, about which the word tolerance springs to mind - built in recent years, for example in Valle d'Aosta, reserved for the rich? And all the luxury industries, the exhibitions of the Office National de la Mode, the elegant restaurants, the Florentine May, the San Remo festivities, the gala shows at Rome's Teatro Reale or La Scala - who, if not the rich, is allowed to enjoy all this? Wouldn't a single gesture be enough to put an end to it, if it were frowned upon by the regime? Clear words are needed here, if only to avoid pernicious confusion in the orientation of Italians: Are *Fiat* and *Lancia* acting badly when they make luxury cars, or are the rich acting badly when they buy and use them? Now, even an old figure from the satirical newspapers of the past has resurfaced (e.g., in *La Stampa della Sera*): the commander* (of course: bald, fat, asthmatic) as a typical representative of the bourgeoisie. But what might have been acceptable in the middle of a democracy rings hollow today. For these blessed titles are conferred by His Majesty the King on the proposal of the regime. It is inconceivable that in the fascist era, unworthy and ridiculous people should be honored with chivalric titles. So, either we abolish the titles, or we leave the commanders alone. Another thing: hundreds of thousands of Italians and Fascists buy lottery tickets every year in Tripoli and Merano - and the

* *Commendatore* in the text, a pejorative term in modern Italian when applied to a person possessing one or more titles that do not correspond to any real merit [N.D.T.].

The government does everything it can to encourage them to do so. On the walls, we read incitements and exhortations in big letters: "Do you want to become a millionaire?", "The race for millions!", and so on. And after the print run, the newspapers exult and announce the happy news to the nation: the new millionaires! It's about time we got our act together: do we want these millionaires, or don't we?

And here's our correspondent's conclusion: "Could we know, finally, who are these bourgeois who deserve so much excess of fury? The bigwigs of high finance, the managing directors of credit institutes and major industries, the snobs of both sexes of the elegant world, isn't it? But the countless small, modestly-paid employees of banks and industry, who, while inwardly congratulating themselves on the anti-Bourgeois mockery, dream only of the plush armchairs of the boards of directors and the fat dividends of their bosses, the clerks, are they less bourgeois than their bosses, closer to the fascist ideal? No. Discrimination between those who strive to maintain and increase their material possessions, and all the others who struggle and toil to achieve maximum well-being, does not stand up to common sense scrutiny. This discrimination between the successful and the unsuccessful is not serious, it's an outdated demagogic argument".

"Only one thing is clear from so much confusion" - adds our correspondent. He notes the existence and exclusivity of a certain lifestyle among the wealthy, an imitation of the style of the nobility of yesteryear, "not the warrior nobility of medieval origin, but the nobility of the ^{eighteenth} century; an exclusivity which - of course, always in relation to and dependent on materialism - has always been the hallmark of the nobility.

contemporary - can resemble, even from a distance, even as a caricature - the exclusivity and aristocratic refinement of the past. Could this be the real target? Jacobean, plebeian instincts rising to the surface! Please tell me if I'm wrong.

We reply to our correspondent that he was not mistaken, but that perhaps he went a little too far. The fact is that in the anti-bourgeois struggle as a whole - and we're not just referring to Italy here - there are sometimes unacknowledged tendencies at work, which are in no way "in line", and which we have not failed to denounce clearly. The whole question depends not on the anti-bourgeois struggle per se, *but on what we are fighting the bourgeoisie for*, and what we want to achieve by fighting the bourgeoisie. That's what we need to understand. But then we realize that the problem goes back to the world of values, of traditional meanings, and thus to the highest question, about which our correspondent said he had found sufficiently clear points of reference in articles published here.

In practical terms, then, what needs to be done, what are the paths to coherence? We return to the two points already mentioned. In a colony in China, an American industrialist, regretting his lack of manpower, thought he'd found the remedy by doubling the hourly wage. But the remedy turned out to be the opposite: instead of working eight hours a day, the workers now only worked four hours a day for the industrialist. It seemed absurd to them to work more than was necessary to cover their real needs. This anecdote captures the spirit of that part of the anti-bourgeois - and simultaneously anti-Marxist - struggle that should be waged in the lowest strata of the people, to bring them back to normality. But in addition, we say, we need to eliminate or at least limit the grounds for scandal.

By eliminating the concentration of wealth, the sense of class, the exclusivism of lifestyle? Not at all. *By*

eliminating usurpation. Let's not kid ourselves. In Fascist Italy, there's the "commander" of the old satirical newspapers, even when the title is new; there's the man who accumulates offices, who in certain sectors has indirect influence and powers not very different from those of the plutocrats in a "democratic" and parliamentary regime; there's the opportunist bureaucrat, cumu- lard and arriviste, as cumbersome as he is intriguing. To purify Italy of all these residues, we don't need repetitive phrases and speeches about "Fascist style" and "Fascist mysticism", we need a precise, daily denunciation of those who are not in line with morality, wherever they may be, without consideration or compromise. Only then would the "bourgeois", whether fascist or not, cease to sleep easy.

Secondly, the problem is not the elimination of wealth, but the scandal it represents when it is in the hands of the vile and unworthy, i.e. when the privilege of the "rich class" is not a matter of superiority, but of "envergures" that are, spiritually speaking, those of plebeians or, precisely, bourgeois. In this case, it's obvious that we can really speak of "social injustices", as anyone who is faced with such caricatures of elitism can legitimately ask themselves why they, too, can't be part of it. There may be a purely ascetic aristocracy - but this one stands at the very top of an ideal hierarchy. In addition, there can be an aristocracy that legitimately possesses wealth, and even, if you like, in certain more or less exclusivist forms, just as its lifestyle and expression are, in a way, exclusivist. There's nothing wrong with that, since it's precisely the overcoming of plutocracy and the "bourgeoisie". The supreme criterion here is, to repeat, *superiority*. When associated with genuine superiority, wealth, opulence and a sense of class no longer constitute a scandal, and the "people" - neither proletarianized nor gentrified - remain in their place, happy and content.

to be what it is, is generous enough to disregard a few abuses and exceptions, as the history of every traditional civilization has always shown us. It's a different matter when, on the one hand, it's no longer superiority that legitimizes wealth, but wealth that creates privileges and counterfeits of superiority; on the other, when the materialistic, upstart virus begins to be injected into "the people", to the point of denaturing it and transforming it into a force of subversion.

This is the way to understand the real tasks of the anti-bourgeois struggle, and then to act correctly, without talking too much, without softening or compromising. Otherwise, everything will be reduced to words, to brilliant polemics, to animosity, whose ultimate motivations could even be suspicious and demagogic, to the point of provoking, in the most serious people, states of mind like those we wanted to point out by reporting our correspondent's considerations.

VII

1941

NEUTRALIZATION OR ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENT?

From the comrade who sent us the observations we drew on for our article *Myth and Reality in the Anti-Bourgeois Struggle* (see *Vita Italiana*, December 1940, p. 621), we received a very interesting piece of writing, which could also serve as a basis for useful considerations on a fundamental problem of the Revolution, that of the ruling class and administration.

Readers may recall an article in this magazine on a similar subject, dealing with the problem of administration and its "neutralization". The central idea was as follows: very often in authoritarian regimes, fascist regimes included, the bureaucracy ceases to be an impersonal system of administration, it becomes "politicized", not in the good sense of the word - introducing the political idea into the state to which one belongs in order to serve it more correctly - but to satisfy personal interests, to put the political authority of the state in the hands of the bureaucrats.

¹ Cf. Arthos (J. Evola), *Settori da battere: la burocrazia "non neutra"*, in *La Vita Italiana*, XXIX, 335 (February 1941), pp. 134-139 (Note by R.D.P.).

These coteries alter, disrupt and hinder relations between the nation and the real political class. So we were talking about the "neutralization" of this plotting and profiteering bureaucracy: its return to the impersonal, apolitical character of those who must content themselves with administering and executing.

Now, the point of view defended by our correspondent in his writing is opposed to that of "neutralization". However, the basic requirement is the same. When we spoke of neutralization, we had in mind a *de facto* evil, which we intended to remedy quickly, if only to prevent a certain bureaucracy from doing any harm. Our correspondent, on the other hand, has in mind a condition of normality in the higher sense, and proposes a model of "improved bureaucracy" which would certainly be political, but in the right sense of the word, so that, apart from the various imperfections of the system still in force, the deviation previously pointed out would be overcome.

Our correspondent happily describes the situation of the ruling class in democratic regimes: "These democratic states always presented the same aspect: administrations deprived of authority and prestige, with bloated, poorly-paid staff, disorganized procedures and, at the top, 'authorities' invested with governmental power, i.e. politicians, almost always incompetent (journalists, lawyers, businessmen), who casually grabbed and exchanged, on the occasion of ministerial reshuffles, the portfolios of War or Public Works, Treasury or Education, and without ever the famous man

♦ Term of Ethiopian origin meaning more or less "tribal chief". Under Fascism, it became synonymous with "little hierarch", with a strong pejorative connotation.

of the street would have wondered if these Ministers hadn't been solemnly flunked in a competition for student posts in their own Ministry". "Léon Blum himself did not hesitate to admit candidly that accepting the condition of competence for government posts would be a mortal blow to the democratic system. Indeed, if any democratic regime were to relinquish the power to distribute ministerial portfolios among its faithful alone, it would thereby renounce its very *raison d'être*".

This explains why democratic states have always had a "sacred terror" of a strong, responsible administration. Ministers themselves, aware of their incompetence, see themselves as influential intruders in the compact world of bureaucrats, and have a distinct aversion to them. But this muted, latent hostility between democratic governments and the administration inevitably and always leads to obvious and serious damage to the solidity of the regimes themselves. This explains why parliaments, the press and public opinion of all political stripes have vied with each other to speak ill of the administration, and why the most benevolent of its critics regard it as a necessary evil.

The democratic system is now in total crisis. However - asks our correspondent - can we really say that the state of affairs described above is truly and completely over, that the question of the administration and the "ruling class" has been settled? This latter problem - our correspondent rightly points out - did not exist in this form in the old authoritarian regimes (Germany, Russia, Austria), where the strength of traditional principles offered more tenacious resistance to the slow contamination brought about by the subversive spirit. It did not exist, because "the power of the sovereign was manifested not only formally, but effectively, through governmental administration". The closest connection

central authority to the administration and the army. What's more, the administration and the army had their own style and mentality, with the fundamental presupposition of deep loyalty, a style and mentality that was passed on seamlessly to the new elements entering the corps of civil servants and officers as they went along. "State careers were open to all. Only the most eminent positions at the Imperial Court were practically reserved for the upper aristocracy. But a judicious selection process, which led to a rigidly exclusivist criterion in the categories enjoying the greatest prestige (the General Staff, the cavalry and naval arms, diplomacy and the Administration of the Interior), tended to ensure maximum homogeneity in public functions, thus effectively promoting the maintenance of tradition". In this way, around the stable central core of the monarchy, a substance of the same stability was organized, guaranteeing the very solidity of the State.

Another feature of the system in question - notes our correspondent - was *competence*. "According to a traditional principle, the highest offices of government were almost always entrusted to *career civil servants*. That a "deputy", i.e. an incompetent politician, could become a minister, for example, was inconceivable to the mentality of the time. Indeed - and everyone reasoned in this way - who, more than a civil servant, could have inspired confidence, thanks to competence and experience acquired over many years, thanks also to a devoted attachment to the State, who would have been a more suitable and worthy guardian of the governmental tradition?"

In this context, service to the State had its own dignity and prestige. The fact that, in these regimes, "service to the Sovereign, to the State, was more envied than any other career or profession, remains incomprehensible, even to the new Italy" - observes our comrade. He relates the following episode: one of his colleagues at

the administration once asked an Austrian government official, a wealthy man who had resigned after the end of the monarchy: "How could you be a civil servant, you who, as a multimillionaire, certainly didn't need a salary? No less astonished, the civil servant replied: "I was a civil servant because I could imagine no greater honor than to serve Her Majesty. I understand the astonishment of both of you," commented our comrade. Back home, public careers enjoy no prestige in the nation, and this remains an undeniable reality, although official language tries to maintain the fiction to the contrary. State service is seen at best as a modest job for those who need it and can't get a better one. Who, more than the bureaucrats themselves, would be surprised to see the son of Pirelli or Agnelli, Albani-Chigi or Doria-Pamphili, taking part in a competition for the post of sub-prefect? Indeed, while membership of the Fascist Party is now felt to be an honor, no one would dream of saying the same about service to the state.

Given this lack of sensitivity, it's only natural that we should neglect the elementary conditions necessary to protect the dignity and enhance the prestige and authority of those who, more than civil servants, should see themselves as a kind of guard or Order of the regime. Even among the most senior administrative figures, for example, notoriety is all too often lacking, "without which the people cannot easily conceive of the authority of outstanding men". Another fundamental *requirement* is also often lacking, that of distance: "Apart from the lack of notoriety, there are the people born in the same place as him, his schoolmates, his friends, his friends' relatives, etc.". Among the latter, Machin will recall the modest origins of Excellence X, Truc was a very good client of sub-secretary Y, a former solicitor, and Bidule boasts of having played

cards, once upon a time, with another Minister. Nothing wrong with that, but what do these reminiscences mean? That another condition of prestige, no less essential than notoriety, is missing: *distance*.

Another negative factor is the sudden and ephemeral appointments to the highest offices, which suggest a kind of improvisation or invention of competence. Once again, this is an after-effect of the democratic style and the predominance of the political factor, understood in the abstract: on the basis of this factor, this or that person suddenly finds himself or herself at the top of a hierarchy, when it would have been logical for him or her to reach it after having worked his or her way through it, albeit quickly, and to stay there. "The man in the street doesn't understand that the apprenticeship should be at the *highest*, not the *lowest*, level of government, nor that the apprentice should be accorded respect and authority. Nor does the precariousness of ministerial functions serve to enhance their prestige. No one thinks they should be held for the rest of one's life, but the fact that, instead of being the natural culmination of an entire life, this office is practically an interlude, even a very glittering one, after which the hierarch, in the middle of his or her life's journey, must descend to positions of lesser responsibility, or return to being the comrade of what's-his-name or what's-his-name, seems incompatible with the hierarchical principle itself. Since comparisons between the hierarchies of the regime and those of the army are frequent and natural, we are entitled to ask whether it is conceivable for an army commander to be downgraded to head a brigade or regiment".

Looking at the administration in general, our correspondent notes that many civil servants are not always provided with the material means necessary for their dignity. "Misery is deplored by the vast majority of employees and civil servants belonging to the low and middle echelons, who, for this reason, do not have the material means to live in dignity.

already unable to aspire to higher office, and who, moreover, feel no discomfort because of the impossibility of maintaining a higher standard of living". Our correspondent is right to point out that it's not a question of facilities for the bourgeois and material life of individuals, nor even of the personal prestige of civil servants, but always of the necessary prestige of the government they represent. "For what prestige will *it have*, when administration is, in everyone's eyes, synonymous with misery? What respect can the masses have for government when countless ministerial officials eat their frugal meals in cafés or even creameries, when the net monthly salary of a Prefecture secretary is completely absorbed by the purchase of a decent suit and a pair of shoes, when many civil servants with large families are obliged to see their relatives do the humblest jobs? Abroad, however, we rightly pursue a policy of prestige. Sumptuous residences for our embassies and legations, automobiles, elegant civil servants - all this seems natural to everyone, but is the prestige of the Government any less necessary in Italy? Or is it only natural for the three dozen Ministers and Under-Secretaries, whom ninety-nine percent of the nation never sees in person? This strange contrast between our prestige abroad and the misery at home reminds me of those people who, while being seen outside in elegant clothes, do not hesitate, at home, to cover themselves with old nipples".

Finally, there's the internal style that persists in much of the state bureaucracy, so that our Administration all too often appears as "a gigantic accounting department, permeated by a police mindset", with, as its counterpart, the "constant, albeit unconscious, preoccupation with not incurring any of the innumerable responsibilities, of which it is said in article...". Consequently, distrust on the one hand, lack of initiative, cou-

It's a very different style that should prevail among the members of a virile and united organization, embodying the authority of the State.

Our correspondent also touches on a number of technical problems, showing that bureaucratic hypertrophy and typical centralism are also remnants of the democratic heritage and obstacles - entirely artificial, caused solely by a lack of courage to reform and completely overhaul the remaining structures - to a return to the spiritual and political significance of the administration and the government class in general.

Certain historical and traditional factors persist, despite the contamination caused by the democratic spirit - our comrade asserts - and, alongside the army and the nobility, these include the administration. We need to build on these elements, and try to give them back all the meaning they once had. Our correspondent therefore fights against the idea that administration is a necessary evil, and that the aim of any reform is to neutralize or reduce it so that it does as little harm as possible. "I believe that Fascist, and therefore revolutionary, reform should, as a first step, affirm the absurdity of this axiom. That it is genuinely democratic in origin is clearly proven by the irrefutable fact that, in anti-democratic regimes, this prevention was not only inconceivable, but the administration enjoyed the highest prestige in public opinion. It follows that not *all* administration is necessarily evil, but *only that* which, created under the influence of (French) democratic tendencies, has fully preserved all the disastrous imprints of these, if only because all reforms were limited to superficial touch-ups. It's true that the spirit of our administration is bourgeois, and therefore democratic, and therefore anti-aristocratic and anti-traditional, but it's precisely in this diagnosis that we're able to identify the most important problems.

of the disease that I see the tendency to therapy, i.e. reform: *the administration must be transformed into an aristocratic caste of the fascist spirit*. A gigantic, revolutionary task, not of a chiseller, but of a pickaxe. To accomplish this, no existing institution, no element in force must be considered intangible".

In addition to a series of technical reforms, it would be necessary to carry out a rigorous human selection process: "to form within the administration, perhaps with special functions to be created alongside the general functions of each ministry, a fascist elite, in the sense of a selected corps or general staff". The elite will have to be made up of men for whom Fascism is a flag, an instruction, who are not content with having a party card, men capable of drive and practicality, who know life better than ministerial circulars, and who are deeply aware that the high prestige of offices and functions depends on that of the regime. In human terms, this new civil servant should serve as an example to others of a high style, an example of distinction, of upright and courageous conduct, of loyalty. "The problem of administration is inseparable from that of authority," and thus concerns the very essence of the new state.

For such a state, it's not enough to look to isolated figures of great stature, to eminent and providential leaders. It is also necessary to dispel the residues of the very concept of a state determined by democracy. "Doesn't the very history of the democratic state show it to be constantly defensive in the face of parliament, the press and public opinion? And what could be more unpopular than this state, namely the taxman, implacable enemy of the taxpayer, and then the legions of carabinieri, finance guards and police? But today, this anarchist mentality has not disappeared. Despite all the rhetorical euphemisms, for many people the State remains the minotaur that threatens the very existence of our society.

the selfish interests of the masses, but doesn't always succeed in overcoming them".

"This is why administrative reform is necessary, why the administration must be strong and homogeneous, why it must be integrated into the ruling class. Therefore, no opposition to the latter, opposition which diminishes the prestige of both, and not even a neutralization of the administration (which would not go beyond antithesis), but the profound fusion between this traditional institution and the forces of the Revolution. Then, and only then, can a feeling of genuine respect for the authority of the State be born in the nation. To give, therefore, the administration and the officer corps the character of castes *sui generis*. It's not an easy task - the unpopularity is almost too obvious - for the democratic mentality, far from being dead, lives on with a strength that seems almost indestructible. By coming together and valuing those elements still capable of understanding the meaning of historical tradition, the elites would give birth to a new tradition of the fascist spirit and would then have to maintain and strengthen it through exclusivist tendencies, of course in the sense of a continuous and severe selection, and would finally have to transmit the tradition to new generations".

These are our correspondent's conclusions. For our part, we frankly endorse them, for they present an ideal which, realized in the cycle of dynastic, traditional and pre-democratic civilizations, also has the sense of a *terminus ad quem* of a desirable development in the future. Neutralization", referred to here in the article already mentioned, was aimed at a state of affairs in which the principle of authority, i.e. the political element, in the hands of an administration retaining the physiognomy it possessed in a democracy and something of the Masonic spirit with which many of its parts were so imbued, was transformed into a factor of anarchy and involution, to the heu of representing the basis of a possible "improvement" of the administration.

This negative possibility having already been realized in too many cases, the traditional ideal of administration, identical to a kind of loyalist Order and fused with the ruling political class within a system of competences and truly hierarchical articulations, this ideal, in itself, is undoubtedly acceptable and in line with normality; but its realization remains no less conditioned by a serious problem: that of the human substance², which amounts to asking to what extent the ethics of the Revolution will give birth to an effectively new man, incapable of compromise and transaction with everything around him that betrays another inner race.

² Evola was thus "putting his finger on the wound", touching on the fundamental issue: that of the human substance of our nation. If Fascism failed then, if we have fallen today to such a level that it is hard to imagine that we could sink any lower, this must unfortunately be attributed to the human substance of the overwhelming majority of Italians. This once again raises the essential issue of building a qualified elite, above and beyond the "people". As long as we fail to address this problem, any talk of "revolutionary", "reactionary" or "counter-revolutionary" will be pure drivel. But this problem is, today, a matter of fact, and still a long way from a possible solution, without any sign of awakening to give us hope [Note from R.D.P.].

VIII
1943
**ABOUT USELESS
PRINTED PAPER**

There's a famous expression: "to make virtue necessity", which is also likely to be given a positive meaning, or one significantly different from the one it usually has. What certain exceptional circumstances impose on us can be an incentive to achieve something worthwhile in itself, which we would otherwise have neglected. The force of things, in this case, instead of being constraining, is a help and a support. Even if abruptly and indirectly, it helps us to get up, or to wake up, or to be tougher and more resolute in our dealings with ourselves.

We could apply these considerations to many of the restrictions imposed by the current state of war, restrictions which would immediately take on a different meaning and see their negative aspect greatly reduced, if we adopted this active attitude. We will confine ourselves here to one particular case: that of the printing paper crisis.

Here, the crisis is not yet as deep as in Germany. But Germany has set us an example: an example which, in itself, seems to us to contain many good things. It's a principle that was adopted right at the start of the war.

To publish a book, special authorization is required. This authorization differs from any preventive censorship measure in that it is *positive*. To obtain it, it is *not enough for the book to contain nothing contrary to current ethics and political ideas; it must also be meaningful*, a real contribution to the country's culture. As the domestic situation became more difficult, and the shortage of paper more acute, the criterion also became more stringent, in the sense that, for both books and magazines, *Vimprimatur* (consisting in the authorization to obtain a certain quantity of printing paper from the Reich) was linked to the quality of *kriegswichtig*, i.e. "importance for the war", naturally in both a direct and indirect sense: For example, a novel, history book or biography is important for the war, if its content is such as to reinforce courage, to nourish the feelings necessary for the solidity of the home front.

Let's disregard this second phase of the restriction, linked to exceptional moments; and let's also note that apart from what galvanizes and refers to the effort for victory, can also be *kriegswichtig* what distracts, relaxes, just as breaks for recreation are indispensable to the warrior as to the ascetic, precisely to enable them to resume the effort later, with fresher strength. We will only examine the first criterion. We consider it to be appropriate and likely to be adopted, but without taking into account the circumstances that may have favored its application, i.e. the need to avoid wasting the quantities of paper available and, on the contrary, to make the best possible use of them.

In fact, this criterion is entirely in line with the realist, organic, active and totalitarian conception of culture characteristic of the new, anti-democratic, anti-liberal state. Not simply tolerating what is *not* harmful, but admitting, wanting and favoring only what is positively useful, what has real signi

fication - a criterion that could be linked to a famous maxim of Dorian wisdom: "nothing superfluous", and which today is merely the corollary of the anti-agnosticism professed by the new state.

Even today in Italy, despite a number of "cuts" already made, there is a whole parasitic editorial and journalistic production, which makes you wonder what it's all about. Even in the political arena.

Let's take this one as an example. We still see a whole series of magazines which, while they may claim to be "fascist", nobody actually reads them, and which, moreover, are totally devoid of meaning, since at best they merely repeat commonplaces and stereotypically echo speeches, phrases or events about which anyone who reads the main organs of the fascist press is perfectly well informed. You'll often only realize that these magazines exist - as has happened to us - when you come across them by chance in the anteroom of a Ministry, in a Confederation, in a hotel, in a bank, even though they've been appearing for years. In reality, these magazines lead an almost clandestine existence, living only because they have managed to obtain direct or indirect subsidies, for example by obtaining a certain number of subscriptions from this or that organization and the offices and companies that depend on it.

On a more general note, Giovanni Preziosi wrote (April 1942) in the "Facts and comments" section of this magazine¹: "I'd like to display in a room a copy of all - and I do mean all - the publica-

¹I.e., the monthly *La Vita Italiana*, whose "Facts and Commentaries" were a regular feature, generally due to Preziosi himself, the magazine's editor. See, at the end of this collection, our bio-bibliographical note on Giovanni Preziosi, which deals in particular with Evola's long collaboration (1931-1943) with his journal [Note by R.D.P.].

Italian periodicals, from the dailies to the latest printed bulletin from the Vattelapesca bakery, from the most dignified illustrated magazine to the hundred publications of cinematic sycophancy, and then I'd like to invite those who are in charge of regulating this matter with a view to saving paper. It would be a spectacular demonstration of the waste of paper we're making here at a time when paper is in short supply. But I can't find a fair in Italy ready to host such an exhibition.

Since then, it's true, there have been "deep cuts". But there's still a lot to be done, and there are other sectors too. There's a whole, almost intimate literary production, which is still with us today, and for which, once again, we ask ourselves what purpose it serves, other than to feed the very stupid vanity of a few fats who want to pass for "authors", writers or poets, or to satisfy the frivolity of a superficial public of dilettantes : not to mention books that have virtually no public appeal, since they are self-published for a small group of acquaintances, or to add a title for some academic competition, or, finally, to serve as a way of letting off steam. In the latter case, it's not uncommon for even standard censorship to have to intervene, but after the fact, when the paper has already been wasted or, at the very least, sah, and when it can only be recovered after it's been trashed. A recent case in point is that of a book printed by a professor, on top-quality paper, and withdrawn from circulation because of its theses violently defending the Jewish cause - and this in the year XXI of the Fascist Revolution, while we are at war against a front of which international Judaism is one of the main forces!²

To return to the other cases, let's say they remind us of the famous evangelical phrase: "Be cold

²The recent measure (March 21), which provides that publications
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or be fervent - for I vomit lukewarm ones". What we mean is that a certain kind of parasitic, vain literature is even more anachronistic and unbearable than a certain kind of "dangerous" literature, likely to incur the wrath of the current censor. Indeed, when faced with this second type of book, every intelligent reader is obliged to take a stand, to think, to react: when it comes to problems of a certain scale, these books, for this very reason, don't reach the part of the public which, for lack of criteria, could certainly be seduced by them. But "intimist" literature, especially when it presents certain "brilliant" qualities and a veneer of intellectuality, seems to us even more harmful, because of its greater possibilities of dissemination and because it encourages every disposition to distraction and diletantism.

If we're not mistaken, the following quip is by Say: "Boileau divided men into those who think and those who entertain. How could the third and far more numerous category - those who neither think nor entertain - have escaped him?".

This joke could not be more appropriate to our situation. We would like to know, for example, what reading so many books or novels - of which our edition is still richly supplied, and which are even very recent, whether Italian texts or translated foreign novels - usually centered on the obligatory theme of love with its inevitable variations and complications, can do for anyone who is not spiritually asleep: books and novels so often exhausting themselves in hollow psychologism, in a narrative of personal vicissitudes deprived of grandeur, deprived of strength, deprived of universal significance, and in which it is sad to note a

The fact that so many politically relevant historical, religious and racial issues require a *nihil obstat*, and not just publications directly concerned with war and international relations, represents a step forward in prophylaxis. It will prevent the recurrence of cases such as the one reported here.

stylistic quality, because it would have been much preferable - as the saying goes - to simply tell your concierge all about it. And since the "bourgeois" public, in the worst sense of the word, and especially the female bourgeois public, are so prone to bad taste, wouldn't it be salutary if a rational system of paper attribution prevented them from being flattered?

The reduction in the thickness of newspapers, through the consequent limitation of "third pages", has already contributed, to a certain extent, to this cleansing which we consider salutary, in another sector, which again concerns the press. You may judge our opinion as you wish, but we believe that, as a general rule, these "third pages" are a kind of scourge in Italy: they have essentially been forums for subjectivist and intellectualizing exercises in aesthetics and "variety", no less than the well-defended strongholds *of cliques** of critics and scholars practicing reciprocal praise and breaking sugar on the backs of those in the opposite group. In other words, a style worthy of true intellectual liberalism, fortified by two prejudices: firstly, the rule of conduct established by many newspaper editors, according to which only "light" stuff should be published, that "everyone" can read, and therefore likely to endorse an inevitably low general level, a level that we should on the contrary seek to raise by all means, without worrying about the risks involved in terms of circulation, and possibly curing ourselves by systematic fasting.

The second prejudice is that of a "free hand" when it comes to anything other than politics in the strict sense of the term, or certain specific issues that could lead to "trouble" depending on the mood of the moment. The requirement

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

We mean the need to organize literary and intellectual cultural expressions around a clearly defined worldview, so that a single theme is reflected, so that the meaning of the fascist spirit is conveyed even when the word "fascism" is not used at all, even when the usual, conventional references are missing. But there's a lot more to say on this subject. The worst thing is that there are people in our country who whisper and talk about restrictions on "freedom of thought" in the literary and intellectual spheres. These people should go to Germany. They would then realize that the "intellectual" still enjoys a privileged liberal status here. In any case, we were talking about "third pages". Whether the reduction of space has always produced an "essentialization" and a turn in an "organic" direction, we cannot say. But, undoubtedly, it would be, here again, an opportunity to make virtue out of necessity, and to follow criteria that would certainly be beneficial, even under normal conditions, for a reduction in all that is vain and affected by dilettantism³. Freedom", understood as the ability to say the silliest and most hollow things, to deal incoherently with this or that subject, without principles, as in the salon conversations of "gentlemen", is precisely what we can't conceive of. It's precisely because there are too many tendencies towards individualism in the Italian "intellectual" that we need to act with surgical resolve in this area.

³It's sad to note that, while we live in epic and tragic times, and that on the battlefields, in so many men, the best race latent in different parts of our people is truly awakening, the prominent writers of the "third page" rarely think of tackling subjects of this kind and drawing symbols from authentic hero figures, in a severe, clear, rhetoric-free way, preferring instead to continue their literary exercises and their little "variety" articles.

Although we're no longer talking about printed paper, we'd also like to allude to the theater. Who, on leaving a theater, hasn't often wondered what the author was after, in short, by writing and performing his or her creation, when no inner echo has resulted, no incentive to think and reflect? Some will reply that it's at least a way to pass the afternoon or evening. As for the authors, they will reply, in most cases, that they are making "art" and that those who make art want nothing, propose no goal, art being an end in itself. We don't agree with either point of view.

Firstly, if it's just a pastime, then frankly, it's better to go and see a film, an "operetta" or, in normal times, go to a nightclub, because in these cases there are no fictions or misunderstandings, but direct conformity to the intended objective, without intellectual and artistic alibis. As for the authors' point of view, which refers to that of "intimist" literature, it would be good for them to realize the situation as it is. On the subject of *purity*, i.e., the *direct* non-intentionality of a certain *great* art, we naturally have nothing to object to; without meaning to, this art reflects the great ideas of an era, and even those from which a given political conception takes its shape. But it's also true that with today's "pure art", as expressed in novels, short stories or, precisely, plays, in at least eighty percent of cases it's just a matter of passing the time, and therefore of monopolizing time that could often be better spent. These "authors" and "creators", in fact, have a *similar* significance today to that of jesters in the old feudal courts. We say analogous, because of two important differences. The first difference is that this vain production is not, as in the past, aimed at the legitimate pastime of aristocrats, warriors and knights, but at a "neutral" bourgeois middle class.

Instead of entertaining, as some of the good short stories and comedies of past centuries could still do, this literature acts as a kind of soft drug, designed to distract, to carry the mind and imagination here and there, but always within narrow, conventional frameworks.

The only real thing in all this, then, is an authentic *vanity fair*: the vanity of the "authors" and the vanity of a flatly bourgeois public, internally shapeless and lazy, which worships a pseudo-culture and readily pricks itself with "intellectuality".

The "virtue" favored by "necessity" that we spoke of at the beginning should consist precisely, today, in a style *that would progressively make life impossible for the bourgeois intellectual*, cutting him off from all resources, accustoming him, as a condition of existence, to something stronger, harder ; with the overcoming, on the one hand, of individualism and, on the other, of a mawkish conformism, an evil which, for various reasons - including the influence of a certain backward-looking Catholicism - is particularly prevalent in our country.

For books and the press in general, the instrument for action of this kind, in a printing-paper-saving regime, should be that indicated at the beginning of this article: a system of allocations according to a criterion that is not *negative*, but *positive*; not giving free rein to what, strictly speaking, *is not* harmful, but demanding something real, something positive, truly corresponding to our central ideas and, today, to the direction of our struggle.

We readily admit that such a system is not without its dangers. If those appointed to oversee such a system did not possess the requisite qualifications, if they did not display the narrow-minded mentality of adjutants, if they did not refer impersonally to

to truly superior ideas, abuses and deviations would become possible. Here, as elsewhere, we come back to the problem of men and the choice of men. But, for the time being, starting to feel this necessity would already be an important first step.

THIRD PART

GERMANISM AND NAZISM

I

1930

THE "MYTH" OF THE NEW GERMAN NATIONALISM

While the German nationalist movement led by Adolf Hitler is fairly well known in Italy, especially since its victory in the recent elections, the same cannot be said of the ideal presuppositions on which its political action is based and developed. Moreover, these presuppositions have only recently been the subject of a systematic exposition. It appears in a large volume published this year, authored by Alfred Rosenberg, *Hauptschriftleiter* of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the leading newspaper of the Hitlerites. The title of the book is: *Le mythe du XX^e siècle (Der Mythos des XX. Jahrhunderts)*, Hoheneichen Verlag, München, 1930 *. We think it would be useful to outline the main points.

The "myth" that Rosenberg, in a somewhat Sorellian sense, proposes to the twentieth century as the principle of its regeneration is the myth of blood, and more specifically, the myth of *Nordic blood*. This myth seeks a "truth" that is no longer abstract, impersonal, uni-

* Tr. in full: *Le mythe du xx^e siècle. Bilan des combats culturels et spirituels de notre temps*, Avalon, 1986.

versalistic, but intensely lived, indissolubly linked to the very roots of individual and collective life. This truth should be found precisely in the blood (race), and it is there that it should be awakened and actualized, to the point of becoming the central force capable of determining every idea and every action. Every blood or race has its own "myth", its own mystical soul, and this, for Rosenberg, is the ultimate, insurmountable fact. "The history of races is simultaneously a mystical history, a revelation, which grasps its own meaning in the great myths it produces.

This premise, or demand, leads Rosenberg to relate directly to a spiritual current, very strong in contemporary Germany, which presents itself as the "back to origins" current. It is believed that primordial times contain, in a pure and transparent state, original visions and meanings, which the contingency of time and the mixing of races have altered and obscured. A renewed understanding of origins is therefore expected to help provide a more precise orientation in the midst of spiritual chaos. Rosenberg refers above all to Herman Wirth and J. J. Bachofen: on the basis of the research and insights of these two authors, he formulates the myth of "primordial Nordic blood", which he then places at the center of his entire conception and at the foundation of the revival of the Germanic race.

In an important and much-discussed book, which we reported on ourselves¹, Wirth argued that

¹ Cf. *Aspetti del movimento culturale della Germania contemporanea*, in *Nuova Antologia*, 1, 1^{er} janvier 1930 [reprinted in: J. Evola, *1 saggi della Nuova Antologia*, Ar, Padua, 1970 and 1982 ; tr. fr. *Aspects du mouvement culturel de l'Allemagne contemporaine*, in *Totalité*, 23, Autumn 1985, pp. 8-27 - N.D.T.]; revue *Ur*, 1928, 11-12: *La tradizione nordico-atlantica*, and 1929, 3-4: *La nascita dell'Occidente* [tr. fr. *Recherches modernes sur la tradition nordico-atlantique*, in J. Evola, *Ur et Krur (1927-1928-1929)*, 4^e vol, Archè, Milan, 1986,

in order to explain a host of symbolic convergences and correspondences, anthropological and philological data, etc., it is necessary to admit the existence of a primordial Nordic race, which, around the Stone Age, moved southwards from the Arctic regions, giving rise to the highest forms of a cosmic-solar civilization*. Rosenberg accepts this idea, and inserts it into a strongly dialectical conception. For him, nothing is more absurd than the idea of a quiet, progressive development of mankind, conceived as a homogeneous whole. The secret of history - he asserted

p. 97-113; *L'Aurore de l'Occident*, in Idem, *Ur et Krur*. *Krur* 1929, 3^e vol, Archè, Milan, 1985, p. 55-97 - Editor's note]. As a general rule, the concordance of several of Hitler's theses with those we set out, on the basis of integral fascism, in our *Imperialismo pagano*, is moreover singular.

[The Herman Wirth work referred to is *Der Aufgang der Menschheit*, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, léna, 1928, an in-quarto volume of 634 pages with detachable appendix and illustrations. The writings that appeared in *Ur* in 1928 and 1929, or rather, for the latter, in *Krur*, were reprinted, with modifications, as chapters in *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno* (1^{re} ed.: Hoepli, Milan, 1934). On this subject, see our article *Evola e l'esperienza del "Gruppo di Ur"*, in *Arthos*, II-III, 4-5, Sept. 1973-April 1974, p. 184-185 - Note by R.D.P.].

* This sentence is incomprehensible, due to a typographical "bumblebee", in the original version of the text: *Il "mito" del nuovo nazionalismo tedesco*, in *Vita Nova*, VI, 11, Nov. 1930, pp. 930-934, a version reproduced unchanged in the Italian edition of the present collection, pp. 183-189, although the error is pointed out by Renato Del Ponte, p. 185, note 2. We have reconstructed the sentence from the Italian text of the second, more detailed and critical version of the same article, published under the title *La "mistica del sangue" nel nuovo nazionalismo tedesco*, in *Bilychnis*, XX, 1, Jan.-Feb.Feb. 1931, pp. 1-12 (article reprinted in: J. Evola, *I saggi di Bilychnis*, partial ed. of the author's articles in this journal, Ar, Padua, 1970; unabridged ed.: Ar, Padua, 1987). The religious studies journal *Bilychnis* (meaning "lamp with two wicks"), published by the Anabaptist School of Theology in Rome, was founded in 1912 and ceased publication in the summer of 1931. Evola was a fairly regular contributor of essays, articles and book reviews, from 1925 to 1931 [N.D.T.].

il __, on the contrary, is the struggle between irreducible truths, qualities and values, insofar as they are the expressions and "myths" of different races, of fundamentally opposed bloodlines.

The Nordic race is said to have been the bearer of the warrior spirit, of assertive values such as freedom and honor, and also of aristocracy: it encountered other races, obscure, southern, Mongoloid, which it clashed with; hence the origin of all decadence, right up to that characterizing contemporary Europe. These ideas, as everyone can see, are not exactly new (Gobineau, Chamberlain, Lagarde); but to clarify the "mystery" of "Nordic blood", Rosenberg also draws on Bachofen's research into the conflict between two types of morality, worship and, in general, spirituality in very ancient cultures: one, of a Nordic-Western character, centered on a *virile* experience of spirituality, with a vision of life as heroic, solar and free, with a rigorous ethical order based on paternal right (*Vaterrecht*); the other, "gynecocratic" (*Mutterrecht*), of an Eastern-Mediterranean character, centered instead on the mystical sense of Mother Earth, in relation to whom all beings are equal and brothers, hence a vision and also a social constitution of a universalist, communist type. To complete the opposition, Rosenberg posits the *Honor-Love* antithesis. Freedom, righteousness, honor, the will to dominate, loyalty - these are the elements that would manifest the nature of Nordic blood. On a higher level, the Nordic sense of life would revolve around the idea of the *will* brought back to its "ancient purity", thus understood as a free, suprasensible principle, clearly opposed to all that is tendency (*Trieb*) and passion, capable - as Master Eckhart put it - of acting for love of action itself.

Although Rosenberg sometimes falls into this trap, it must be emphasized that the "Nordic myth" of the new German nationalism cannot be identified, purely and simply, with ideologies on the superiority of the race.

and then of the German people, which have quietly run their course. The frameworks to which we must refer are, let us repeat, those of "pre-antiquity", the field in which Wirth conducts his research on North-Atlantic cultures. Historically, Nordic blood is certainly to be found in the pure Germanic lineages, but it also serves as the foundation of the warrior cultures which, in India, succeed the first Vedic period, of a magical nature; it appears in the sapiential conceptions of Iran; in Greece - manifested in the solar symbol of the Hyperborean Apollo in the cycle of heroic myths - it fights against Eastern conceptions and mores; finally - again according to Rosenberg, who closely follows Bachofen's interpretations here - this blood gave rise to the miracle of ancient Rome. Leaving aside the later period of democratization, then Asiaatization, Rome would even express the triumph of the "Nordic" vision and will in the ancient world. With such an extension, which enables it to incorporate the highest values of the classical universe, the adjective "Nordic" has, in this history or - if we prefer - in this mythology of races, a scope and degree of seriousness superior to that of simple Pangermanism: it is a universal myth and an ideal typicality, rather than something that can be geographically conditioned.

With the fall of Rome, the mixing of races and values - and, consequently, decadence - only increased. According to Rosenberg, Christianity, with its "fraternalist", humanitarian, loving and forgiving values, had inflicted a mortal blow on the North-Western tradition. And the Catholic Church would have done even worse. The German nationalists' *j'accuse** against Christianity is based on the following points:

1. - the Semitic-Syriac residue it still contains, and

♦ In French in the text [N.D.T.].

its religion of love and humanity, opposed to the Nordic religion of honor and warrior pride;

2. - its *rasenlos* universalism, deleterious for the conscience of the blood, and necessarily leading to an abstractism which has for answer that of the purely intellectualist philosophy of Rome ;

3. - (its) doctrine of grace, its precepts of mechanical obedience to Jesuitical morality, its dogmatism and priestly authoritarianism, all of which are contrary to the Nordic sense of responsibility, honor and freedom ;

4. - all its sacramental aspect, even more contrary to the Nordic spirit, this *ex opéré opérato* action of rite and sacrament, which makes Rosenberg not hesitate to equate Catholicism with the demonic-magical worldview of a primitive *medicine man*.

The antithesis between "Nordic" culture and Roman Catholic culture is thus affirmed, and in the clearest possible form. One of the formulas of the new Germanic nationalism is precisely: *Gegen Rom* (Rome as Catholicism, not ancient Rome, which represents for him, on the contrary, one of the highest incarnations of the "Nordic" spirit) *und gegen Judentum*.

It's worth pointing out, however, that such an opposition is not established, as in so many other thinkers, for the greater glory of Protestantism. On the contrary, Protestantism is criticized for preaching a return to the texts of the Semitic tradition, while Catholicism is at least credited with having preserved and adapted some of the cosmic symbols of the primordial Nordic tradition.

So: against Catholic Rome - "*compositum* intellectualistemagique-dogmatique" - and against Judaism. Rosenberg writes: "Even today, three great forces are vying for the conquest of the world. The first corresponds to the Nordic ideal and blood, with its principles of freedom, honor and heroism.

The second includes the variants of the religion of love, from those that end in pallid acquiescence to a priestly caste to those that express themselves in various democratisms and humanitarianisms, ending in "Dostoyevskian man", in that profound decomposition of race and values that made Bolshevism possible. Finally, the third force is that of economic-materialist individualism, the anonymous, homeland-less finance that is trying to take over the world by means of gold.

This third force corresponds to *Semitism*. The bitter, violent anti-Semitic campaign waged by Hitler's nationalism is well known, but its ideal justification, in which it rekindles an old racial hatred, is less well known: the fight against the Jew - the *Saujude* - is the fight against gold, against the economic determinism of international finance, which is strangling the old "Nordic" values of quality, dignity, race and aristocracy in a network all the more formidable for its invisibility and subtlety; because international finance is considered to be in the hands of the Jews, and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, about the Jewish plan to conquer the world with gold, is considered to be more than just a myth.

Reawakening the original force of the old Nordic tradition - *die Urkraft altnordischer Ueberlieferung* - and turning it into a "myth" intensely lived by German blood, that's what the new movement, with Hitler as its political leader and Rosenberg as its ideologist, wants. Its symbol is a pre-Christian one: the black hooked cross - the *Hakenkreuz* - a Nordic sign of fire that burns by its own virtue and of the rising sun - and this sign appeared on the thousands of flags fluttering in the wind at the grandiose rallies of the last German elections. Rosenberg goes on to write: "Against the old, feminized world, German thought today demands: glory, honor, race, people and Eut - culture, autarky, recognition of the mystery of blood, defense of type". Neither indi-

vidualism and universalism - both products of decadence - but a return to a sense of *organicity* that resolves the opposition between blood and culture, individual and state, and liberates us to return to our buried roots, where we are ourselves and, at the same time, realize the profound type of our race. This is the basis of the new idea of the mystical and, at the same time, strongly carnal "nation". "The myth of blood - the myth of Nordic blood - is the myth of the 20th century, the myth of rebirth after the universalist, democratic and intellectual decadence of the 19th century.

"The idea of honor - and national honor - is for us the beginning and the end of all our thought and action. "Honor and freedom are not empirical qualities for us, but essences beyond space and time". We proclaim a return to Master Eckhart, seen as one of the most typical expressions of the Nordic and aristocratic sense of spirituality: Eckhart, who put forward the right of the "noble soul", the duty of man to be one with himself, free and master of his works, a closed, divine, detached, supra-sensible entity, conjoined from all eternity with the supernatural causes of things and such that if it were not, "God himself would not be". The idea of a future "German Church" is formulated, based on a spirituality of this type, which is also to be found in the ancient myths of Nordic *paganitas*, which are to be elevated to the status of symbols and substituted for the Semitic myths of the Old Testament.

If these ideal positions of the new German nationalism have, on the whole, a definite physiognomy, the paths leading to their concrete realization do not appear so clear-cut: there are even more than one erroneous choice in this respect. Given the broad scope of the term "Nordic", it would have been desirable above all if Rosenberg, in dealing with modern times, had not confined himself to the German people, but had also explored the possibilities of the "Nordic" element elsewhere: for this gives rise to the question of whether the "Nordic" element is still present.

In the second place, it would have been desirable for him to have formulated the relationship between "Nordic" values (always as "ideal typicalities") and modern civilization more precisely and more cautiously. Secondly, it would have been desirable for him to have formulated more precisely and more carefully the relationship between "Nordic" values (still as "ideal typicalities") and modern civilization. Opposition to the ahrimanic tyranny of gold: all very well; but isn't gold an inseparable part of a whole, constituted by modern materialistic and mechanical civilization? And what is Rosenberg's attitude to this civilization? He even makes dangerous concessions. On the basis of the active will and the agonistic overcoming of the world (to the heu of escape from the world and love), he comes to justify the madness of modern activism and mechanicism, i.e., of that which expresses, in the illusion of a wholly external and inorganic power over things and systems of things, man's renunciation of all true power and all true direct domination. Rosenberg goes so far as to write that "those who have not understood the value of machines and technology in surpassing the world, have not understood one aspect of the Nordic spirit, and will therefore not be able to understand the other, mystical and metaphysical aspect either". To which we would like to retort that it is precisely those who allow themselves to be taken in by such an illusion who stand little chance of grasping the best of the "Nordic" myth. World domination through the machine is a factor of decadence, just like the "Semitic" domination of peoples through gold: both are creatures of a quantitative, universalist, inorganic, anti-aristocratic - "antinordian" - civilization.

This misstep was not without consequences, even on a political level. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's "Pan-Europe" - a "Judeo-French creature" - was opposed by Rosenberg's idea of a North German coalition, based on other, anti-democratic principles. Gradually, however, the meshes of the net widened, eventually forming a

a kind of bag that holds all sorts of things. It includes, for example, England, and, if only as part of a sympathetic understanding, North America. In our opinion, this means subordinating the point of view of blood and spiritual tradition to a much more empirical point of view: it means opening the doors to mechanical and industrial civilization, of which the "Semitic" gold factor is indissociable; it means introducing - or, to put it better, maintaining - the worst ferment of decomposition in this blood that we want to regenerate through the mystical *Urkraft altnordischer Ueberlieferung*. We can see that this incoherence is linked to the error of assuming as a "Nordic value" what, from a higher point of view - which we would have liked to see Rosenberg hold to more firmly - does not deserve this honor at all. What can proceed from the aristocratic, qualitative ideal of spirituality and that living penetration of nature's interiority that Rosenberg so often links, with Goethe, to the Nordic spirit, is something quite different: something that, *in primis et ante omnia*, implies a radical revolt against the modern world, especially the Anglo-Saxon one, taken as a whole, and not in any of the more visible forms of its decadence.

We believe, therefore, that the examination of certain political *outcomes** should not be neglected in the study of the new *Hakenkreuz* movement: for they may even force us to ask ourselves to what extent, in this movement, ideas have been called upon as reinforcements to justify a practical reality, and to what extent, on the contrary, practical reality tends to be formed and subordinated to an idea.

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

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1933

***NEUE SACHLICHKEIT:*
A CONFESSION
OF THE YOUNG GERMAN
GENERATION**

In the preface to his infamous "war novel", E. M. Remarque writes: "This book is not intended to be an accusation, nor the affirmation of a thesis. Its only purpose is to tell the story of a generation, shattered by war even when spared by grenades".

The Prince de Rohan similarly wrote: "Our generation had no youth. Having entered the world tragedy as an adolescent, it has emerged as an adult, serious and solitary, bearing only the traces of the harsh discipline of obedience and command.

Nietzsche, prophetic on this point too, had already foretold the "collapse of civilization", the "European nihilism", but he had also written: "When the tree dies, only the flowers that are already dry fall; that which does not kill us makes us stronger". And just as the *Book of Kings* speaks of a light, pure breath, "which alone carries the Lord", *after* the earth has shaken and the fire has burned, so Nietzsche had drawn up the myth of a new race rising again

after the collapse and returns to the great breath of free altitudes and realities that are no longer human.

Now, it's fair to say that something similar is taking shape in the atmosphere of the countries where these writers were born. The fact is that war, more than anywhere else, has brought destruction to the peoples of the North, not only materially, but above all spiritually. A generation has been broken in spirit. It has found itself separated as if by an abyss from previous generations: it no longer understands them, it is something else. It lives another life, and doesn't even know which bridges have collapsed behind it. It's not a question of new artistic or intellectual forms, but rather of a profound change in attitude that has taken place practically without human involvement, as a state of affairs created by the very force of things. Man's relationship with reality is no longer the same; even the meaning of human existence has changed. In Germany, a new world was born, cold, without halftones, devoid of sentimentality, free, anti-romantic: the world of *neue Sachlichkeit*, of the "new essentiality"*.

Neue Sachlichkeit is the watchword of a new Nordic youth.

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To feel the extent to which this transformation penetrates all interests, all values, all meanings of existence, following a cen-

¹ We prefer to render *Sachlichkeit* as "essentiality" rather than "objectivity". *Sachlichkeit* comes from *Sache*, "thing", not only in the material sense, but also in the more general sense of a concrete, objective element ("to stick to the thing"). *Sachlich* means that which adheres to a thing, to its essence, to the exclusion of the arbitrary, the subjective, the accidental.

tral, you need to read a recently published book, which is a significant and courageous profession of faith from the new German generation, and more specifically from the mouth of a twenty-seven-year-old man. The author's name is Franz Matzke. The book is entitled *Nous les jeunes, nous sommes comme ça!*² It's not about a doctrine, but about a reality, a reality that may be worrying for many, unsuspected by many, and a sign, in any case, of the times to come.

"I write about the meaning of life for the younger generation, for those among us who are not broken, for those who are of one piece, for the Lords of tomorrow. There is a new race, with a new attitude of mind and body, which is born today fighting, which will dominate tomorrow, which will know decline the day after tomorrow".

"Supports were removed, bonds dissolved, forces were deprived of their objects: we were left in the void, in total relativity," Matzke writes, "but we were not defeated. We created support and a way of life for ourselves. Chaos did not overthrow us; on the contrary, we conquered a clearer vision and the security of our state. And *we liberated the world of reality from the world of the human*."

What characterized the previous generation, according to Matzke, was the cult of the "soul". In the name of this cult, things were clothed in sentiment, romantic nuances, passionate warmth, tragic or intimist forms, "intentions" of all kinds. The verism of the last century was itself no more than a literary mask. At the center of everything was the human person, with his or her problems, complications and judgments: and everything acquired importance only insofar as it referred to this center. We wanted the world to speak to us of man, to assume our form. We

² F. Matzke, *Jugend bekennt: so sind wir!*, Reclam Verlag, Leipzig, 1930.

In this way, we animated coldness with the warmth of our hearts, spiritualizing the world to attenuate the distance separating it from us and to resolve the harshness of its contours: *Gefühl und Gemüt*. We never let things reach us directly; they always had to reach us via the "soul".

All this would no longer exist in the new Nordic generation. They tend to restore to the world the characteristics of eternity and indifference to the human, which had been lost in previous eras. They encounter things in all their coldness and hardness, silencing the soul and having eyes only for what is real: *neue Sachlichkeit*.

"We are *sachlich*," writes Matzke, "because everything that is only human disgusts us, and because we talk about it as little as possible; because we see reality, which for us stands higher than the thoughts of men - the reality of things is great, infinite, and everything human is small, conditioned, imbued with feeling. We are *sachlich* because the objectivity, lack of pretension and language of things is closer to us than the loquacity of thoughts and passions; because only what is expressed in terms of reality interests us and because everything that is immediate expression from heart to heart is repugnant to us; because in every field we despise the vanity of author and because the objective, in its universality, is for us superior to any private psychology".

So, first and foremost, liquidation of any compromise between things and man: purify things of the human, make the world calm, stable, clear, cold: magnificent as on the first day; restore its primordial, mute, unsettling grandeur. No twilight, no thin veil of illusions and thoughts: "better ugly and clear than beautiful and veiled".

"Just as under the midday sun every patch of shade disappears, so under our gaze," writes Matzke, "the

things are freed from the anaemic life of our fellow man, which had nested everywhere to weaken, falsify and corrupt them: they become free and limpid once more. It's not that we've become insensitive, and only others will think that a soul that is silent is no longer a soul: we too have a sensitivity, but it no longer lights up in the face of other people's feelings, it only lights up in the presence of real things and in the presence of what, in man, is real, elemental".

This is the core of *neue Sachlichkeit*. Linked to this change in attitude is a shift in interest in aspects of nature. This new generation is no longer interested in the picturesque, the "artistic", the unusual, the characteristic. They are no longer looking for the "beautiful", the stuff of dreams and nostalgia. For Matzke, the adjective "beautiful" is a word reserved for human works, which cannot be applied to nature; he himself knows no landscapes that are more "beautiful" than others, but only landscapes that are more distant, more immense, calmer, harder, colder than others.

"Nature is for us the great kingdom of things, of those things that want nothing from us, that do not impose themselves or demand any attitude from our souls: that stand mute before us, like a world eternally alien within itself. This is precisely what we need today, this grandeur and remoteness, this entity that rests within, far above the petty joys and sufferings of mankind. An impenetrable realm of objects, in which we ourselves feel like objects - full freedom from all that is purely subjective, from all vanity and all personalist nullity - this is what nature is for us. We are denied any inclination to worship, and so our worship is not a worship of nature. No God speaks to us from the landscape. No God and no man. And such is the greatness of the landscape and our happiness.

Nature no longer speaks to the new youth in the form of picturesque waterfalls among the trees, sunsets and moonlight; it speaks to them through its deserts, its rocks, its steppes, its glaciers, its black Norwegian *fjords*, its implacable tropical suns - in the form of what is primordial, calm, inaccessible, silent. Matzke notes that the very form of the feeling for nature is now different: this feeling is epic, no longer lyrical, tranquil and continuous, no longer exceptional. The previous generation leafed through or contemplated mountain photo albums; the new generation climbed rocks and icy walls; nature drove the former towards feelings, it drives the latter towards actions; the former felt nature through the "soul", the latter experienced it through the body. What's more, for the previous bourgeois-romantic generation, nature was like a mistress of Sundays or summer rest periods: a poetic interruption to city life. For the new generation, nature is something fundamental, something that exists, something serious, something hard: it's the vast world where the stone and steel panoramas of the great metropolises, the endless straight streets, the great building sites bristling with cranes, are put on the same level as the immense, solitary forests, whose austere impression never abandons the soul.

Neue Sachlichkeit thus forges an inner style, a posture of the mind.

"Just as we boycott feeling," writes Matzke, "so we ignore the tendency as well as the pleasure of expressing ourselves and 'communicating'. We feel a natural reluctance to express our inner selves. We no longer like to talk, and when we write, we evoke things rather than feelings. We stick to actions and primordial states, without hypocrisy or effusion, in the objectivity of our attitude, in the calm of our soul, in our love of distance".

This is precisely another characteristic of the spirit of the new Nordic generation: it is collected and serious, even in the midst of the madness and din of the modern world, even among the inextricable network and demony of the great cosmopolitan organizations.

"We feel ourselves in a hard world, without supports and guides. We rest in a seriousness that is calm, natural and simple, and not the consequence of inner or outer preoccupations. Silence and action are the hallmarks of our style. We love impersonality, the disappearance of man before the work or the thing. We understand the greatness of the anonymity of the Middle Ages, so stripped of all personal vanity, where no one cared to pass on to others the sorrows or joys of his heart, but quietly created his work. For us, "tragedy" is simply a private affair, and concerns only those who consider themselves important. We are more inclined towards facts and actions than feelings and effusions. For us young people today, there's no God to whom we can tell what we're suffering: the greater the pain, the tighter our lips. We see the opposite as smallness, not greatness. Works of art do not speak to us of their author: they stand before us, closed and independent, like 'things' in a higher sense".

So, in place of the "human" warmth and closeness of yesteryear, coldness and distance in relation to things as well as people; "especially in relation to people".

"Objectivity forbids proximity, demands distance: to see, you have to stand apart. "On the other hand," confirms Matzke, "we feel ourselves to be a sohtar race, even when we form a mass, but not in the sense of yesterday's solitude. Yesterday's solitude was painful, desperate and romantic, whereas solitude is a perfectly natural state for us. We are free of all vanity for our "I", we think of ourselves as "I".

We are not selfish, we accept hierarchies like the generations before us, we act, and yet we feel alone. We feel that deep down we are not connected by any bridge, that all ties have been broken, that we are strangers like travelers in this world, even when the itinerary is the same for everyone, even to the things we love: our land, our friends, our wives. What's more, it's not a forced solitude, full of regrets for things lost or ideals disappointed. We can't regret such ideals, because we never had them. We remain calm in our state, in our distance. It seems as self-evident and natural as a law of things. We feel totally alienated from individualism as a theory or religion of the Ego - so dear to those who came before us: it no longer speaks to us in any way. For us, the "I" is not a mystical, transcendental depth: it's something like a hard stone, on which we are firmly rooted.

"It is precisely because outer life has been freed from the manifestations of the soul and the assertions of the 'I', precisely because we have moved and enclosed the core of life within" - our author continues - "that outwardly we are perhaps much less individualistic, much more inclined to associate and submit than previous generations".

And Matzke clarifies this idea with an effective image: "Just as the shepherd comes down from his mountain when the country is in danger, goes into line with the others, fights with them, talks and sings, then returns to his mountain when the enemy is defeated - to be alone again with the green meadows and dark forests, the avalanches that tumble down and the azure sky - so our existence: made of solitude and, simultaneously, ready

to action. To organize ourselves for an idea, to be enthusiastic, is incomprehensible to us: on the other hand, we are ready to organize ourselves for a common action, for the realization of the same goal".

* *

It's easy to foresee the consequences of such an attitude in particular areas of life. All heat silently contracts at the center; outside, everything becomes clearer, harder, simpler, clothed in ice or pale metal. The heavens gradually distance themselves from the earth.

Love, for example, is de-dramatized: "Because we are not incessantly subject to the senses, but practically free in relation to them, everything sexual no longer has the significance and importance it once had for us. The erotic obsessions of Freud or Weininger, the expediences of excitement and morbid transgression of a certain pre- and post-war literature, the romanticism of the single, fatal passion, the tragedy of unrewarded or betrayed love - we feel them to be things of a generation we no longer understand. Here, too, an inner transformation has taken place, as a self-evident fact. We have acquired a new spontaneity, a new clarity, a new "objectivity". Instead of the "couple", for us the man next to the woman is natural: *der Herr neben der Dame*. Our friends, less adorned and embellished than those of yesteryear, have nonetheless remained feminine, even if they ignore the multiple sentimentalities and bourgeois and moral limitations that were once obligatory for a well-bred young lady. Moonlight romances no longer mean anything to us; in terms of form, we've become cold at heart: without phrases, gestures, sentimenta-

lity, with no personal history. Not that love - the sexual attraction between man and woman - is dead; it has changed form: it is no longer the restless, red-hot flame of the past, but a clear, unflickering, self-evident light. On the outside, love has virtually lost all its distinguishing marks, stripped of all hypocrisy and complication. For the young people of yesterday, the meaning of love was moreover supraterrrestrial, miraculous; it now appears to us as an everyday thing, incapable of constituting the center and seriousness of an existence, and woman no longer stands before us as an idol, but as a being who is our equal".

"We know," adds Matzke, "that not even women can offer us a passage beyond our fundamental solitude: for us, she's only a companion in life, perhaps a more intimate and more secure one, who we don't know will ever leave us, but to whom we nonetheless remain faithful; a companion to whom unfathomably foreign forces bind us internally, about whom we know many things - as she does about us - but who, however, is once again a stranger to us in essential respects. We can't say whether we're happier or less happy this way. Happiness, by the way, is something entirely our own. We've lost some things, gained others. In any case, we don't feel sick or *jaded**, and it's not our will that comes into play here, but the very force of things".

We'll soon see what the implications of *neue Sachlichkeit* are for culture in the truest sense of the word. But first of all, we think it would be a mistake to believe that we are dealing with simple materialism, or with something analogous to the two-dimensional, anti-metaphysical mentality of the other side of the Atlantic. Outwardly speaking, there may be

♦ In French in the text [N.D.T.].

But the meaning is fundamentally different. Unlike the American soul, the Nordic soul has a whole tradition of interiority that cannot be liquidated with the stroke of a pen. It seems to us that *neue Sachlichkeit* is not the elimination of the metaphysical, but rather its coincidence with reality in an exact conformity of container to content. It's like a new classicism, a new Doric paganism returning in Nordic form, perhaps harsher, less harmonious, less luminous, more serious and active, but not without its own metallic, hidden interiority. And it has nothing to do with flat, prosaic Anglo-Saxon simplification. The closed, unequivocal, exact form of a physical object is not, for the new Nordic generation, part of a materialistic outlook, but rather a symbol of a certain spiritual bearing. The indefiniteness of feelings and effusions is rejected not so much for reasons of aridity, or the practical effectiveness of an ideal similar to the classical ideal of *virtus*, as for a desire for form, a passion for what is strong, clear and simple. Matzke loves the world of technology, but as an expression of a "will to the adequate": *Wille zum Adaequaten*, while remaining as indifferent to machines in themselves as he is to a knife or a fork. Here, Matzke appreciates the criteria of minimal dispersion of force and the most direct path, but, once again, not out of love of convenience, but out of a passion for clarity and objectivity, a hatred of everything that is superfluous, that returns to nothingness, that is pushed without object³. Finally, if we seek and love in nature the pure *Sach-*

³ Matzke emphasizes the difference in this new attitude to the world of the machine, both in relation to those who saw it as an apo-logy, and imagined that it would open the way to "progress" (the mentality of the *Excelsior* ballets), and in relation to those who, more recently, have seen the machine as a kind of apocalyptic monster, author of the decadence of civilization (*Metropolis-style* myths). With regard to

lichkeit, if we have nothing but disgust for the previous cult of interiority and psychology, it's not to give birth to a verist or positivist cult of matter, but because sensitivity for something that is no longer just human is stronger than anything else.

It's also in this light that we need to understand the great renunciation towards which the new Nordic youth is heading: the renunciation of belief.

"Do we affirm the existence of God? Do we deny it? Neither. These issues have lost all meaning for us: we no longer understand them, they are far removed from us. We're not devotees, we're not romantic God-deniers, and we're certainly not "free thinkers". We are not enemies of the churches. We consider all religions worthy, but all have become equally alien to us, as have the great metaphysical systems. We regard them only as works of art, or as phases of historical reality. For us, everything lies within itself, all things are equally near and far to us - so blissfully foreign and mute - and we go among them, acting and contemplating. Our eyes turn in all directions and towards all objects: our hearts may also be full of joy or sadness, elevation or misery, but we are always alone. We no longer feel looked upon by a Father, but on the bare earth. Nothing in us speaks of God, neither joy nor suffering. We have lost God and faith in God, *lost* in the literal sense. Some will say that we are impoverished in spirit: but can we call someone poor because of the absence of something that nothing in them requires? We have no God, but

The new generation is also cold and indifferent to the machine. They use it as a natural thing, and are no more enthusiastic about the most miraculous technical inventions than they are about the fork or knife we use every day.

we are neither atheists, nor deprived of a divine character, *wir haben keinen Gott, aber wir sind weder gottlos noch entgöttert**".

The same typical phenomenon of the disappearance of all support, which also produces a real collapse, is repeated in other fields. Indifferent to all faith, this new Nordic generation, unwittingly experiencing it as a state of affairs, has little sensitivity or interest in philosophical constructs. It no longer overestimates thought: it deprives the "thinker" of the primacy and cult it enjoyed in previous decades. It prefers to know that it doesn't know, rather than believe or speculate. The search for a "meaning" or "essence" behind the world, she doesn't know what it means. Any "cosmic synthesis" seems to her vain and cheap.

"Today, we have a security in life that dispenses with any metaphysical or religious justification. Deprived of any transcendent background, we are not overwhelmed by it, nor do we suffer from it: we act, think and fight as if we were the same.

⁴It may be interesting to note that Matzke's love of *neue Sachlichkeit* leads him to appreciate - stylistically speaking - Catholicism rather than Protestantism. He argues that, in Catholicism, the private excitements of the soul in direct dialogue with "God" don't count for much. To be Catholic means to be a member of a grandiose world army whose supreme leaders stand far away from us. In Protestantism, everything is warm and *herzlich*; in Catholicism, everything is cold and rigorous, in the realm of order, command and service, with its stable form and severe construction. Here, the soul does not express itself in immediate, sentimental forms, but speaks through things, signs and symbols, and is therefore *sachlich*. Catholicism is distance; Protestantism, proximity and intimacy. - Of course, the question here is not to what extent Catholicism can identify with this interpretation, where it is clear that the pagan-Roman element of Catholicism is more highly valued than the original, "fra-ternitarian", devotional element of the Christian ferment.

those who, on the contrary, had one and who, in order to live, needed to give "meaning" to their lives. For our part, we expect no compensation of any kind from our actions. The death of the gods has not turned us into Epicureans, materialists, passive skeptics, ascetics or apathetic contemplatives. We like to act, and we feel there's a lot to do around us. We live in a kind of everyday heroism, devoid of fanfare and romantic or titanic colorations. We like to subordinate ourselves to a task, to a goal, even to the point of self-contempt, but we don't need supporters for that: it's the ethic of the aviator flying over the oceans, of the sportsman, of the scientist: This is the ethic of the aviator who flies over oceans, of the man of sport, of the scientist: "may I succumb so long as the objective to which I dedicate myself is achieved"; it is the ethic, too, and above all, of the good soldier, who does not ask for the "ultimate meaning", the "justification", or even a reward before doing what he must do, but who acts and maintains a rigorous and silent bearing, both towards himself and towards others".

The word "progress" in its literal sense has become, Matzke continues, unintelligible to us. "Not only do we not believe in it, we also don't know what it means. Certainly, we see 'progress' in particular practical areas, such as the organization of telephones or hospitals. We work for progress in this direction at least as energetically as anyone else, but we don't imagine that humanity is taking steps forward in this way. This is not "pessimism" about "civilization", as if we believed in certain values or ultimate goals, which we've discovered to be unable to guide current reality, or even simply inadequate; it's the very meaning of these values that we miss, and that's why there's no need to speak of "pessimism" about us. So, our action is free: all around us is pure atmosphere, cold and hard. The very concept of the essence of "culture" has been

transformed in us: "culture" is for us the form of an inner attitude, whose greatness is measured by its unitary and conclusive character: and what does this have to do with paintings, poems or speculative research? We can see that today a new sense of life and action is asserting itself in the younger generation, but not thanks to a new "culture" or a new philosophy. It is asserting itself fatally not as a 'value', but as a state of affairs, and perhaps it won't even have a reflected or artistic expression, because 'expression' no longer interests the new generation: it is no longer an 'artistic' and 'expressionist' generation".

The fundamental theme of the "return to the wide world" is also present. Matzke speaks of his disgust with books and the arts, and explains the meaning of his new passion for sport, touching on something that is far from having left its mark only on the youth to which he belongs. However - and let's stress this here too - it would certainly be a mistake to establish a simple identity between the new Nordic attitude and that which may characterize American-style sport.

"One difference from the generation that preceded us" - says Matzke, for example - "is that the substitutes or transpositions of life have ceased to interest us more strongly than life itself. What reveals itself through our own sensations, in the sun and the air, interests us more than what offers itself to us through the feelings of others. Yesterday, we read travelogues; today, we are travellers, and our journeys are more "epic" than "lyrical": speed destroys the episodic, the local, the picturesque and the particular of the lands we cross, no longer linking us to them sentimentally, opening us up to vast, unitary, simplified, universal sensations, to the impression that we are travellers in the world, an impression associated with that of a state of power and security in relation to things. We love sport, not as a fashion or a novelty.

veiled religion, but because it frees the things of the soul, because it leads us from the realm of sensations to that of actions, in cold, clear air: because it speaks the language of things and the body, not that of the soul. All we want is air - even if it's icy and sharp - and the harsh, unmitigated aspects of the world. We want to be awake, not dreamers with fine words. Or rather, strictly speaking, we don't even 'want' to be: we couldn't be otherwise.

"We have become too serious, and art is no longer enough to satisfy this seriousness. We have become too serious, and art is no longer enough to satisfy this seriousness. We dispute everything that has been said about art revealing the essence of the world: for these fine words have never been backed up by proof. Art is a way of hovering above things, not a way of getting to their core. "Life is serious, art is vain": we understand again these words of Schiller".

It follows that, at the height of the compenetrations of art and life, we demand the clearest separation between one and the other: we seek a sensation of things without passing through the intermediary of the artistic soul of man understood as our neighbor: things insofar as they are great, distant, independent of time and man. We demand that they speak to man, rather than that man speak to them in his outbursts. In the best of cases, art - after Schlegel - is accorded a value of irony, of pure form: it is a thing in itself, on the side.

That's why "we prefer to walk in the open air, and only then, if we still have the time and the desire, to visit a library or a museum. Should we call this progress or regression? We don't know, and it doesn't really concern us. We only know that it's a different condition from the previous one, but we don't feel any poorer or more unhappy. Our sense of

Today, the essence of existence is formed in factories and homes, not in museums: it's brighter, clearer, more unified. We're at home in cities, on rivers or on mountain tops, not among books or in theaters. Around us, above us, stands the real world, inexorable, large, soulless, and poems and paintings are only a small part of it. The world is vast, but the poems are brief and the paintings narrow. We can't place the work of man above that of God, and that's why we feel "cultureless" - *kulturlos* - and why the French can say of us Germans: they're barbarians".

Man's relationship with himself, with his "soul", is also undergoing a transformation in the direction of *neue Sachlichkeit*. The passion for introspection, for the analysis of thoughts and feelings carried to those morbid limits of which, after the Russians, a Joyce or a Proust are such typical representatives in the modern world - these are things the new generation wants nothing to do with. It no longer looks, so to speak, at the soul from the inside, but from the outside, dispassionately, as one might observe things in the outside world when a clear light brings out their contours, sharp and raw. There is no longer any emotional, literary or mystical intermediary to stand between consciousness and the contents of consciousness. Hence a sincere attitude, the destruction of all individualistic narcissism, of all complication, of all mask.

"In the final analysis", writes Matzke, "even the life of the soul is for us a thing, an existing datum, with its attributes of foreignness, remoteness and fatality. Rather than looking at the world from the point of view of the soul, we look at the soul from the point of view of the world. Then everything seems clearer, more natural, more obvious, while everything that is purely subjective seems increasingly insignificant, increasingly laughable, even when we are silently experiencing the same passions, the same emotions, the same emotions.

same desires, the same sufferings and the same struggles as those that gave rise, in others, to the great cries of tragic humanity. In what manifests itself in the creative interiority of men, we are interested only in what they know how to express, not through feelings, but through things, with clarity, coldness and objectivity: *Sachlichkeit*; that whose form is large, stable, defined, and which they express in broad strokes, that which has a firm structure; that which betrays the constructive will of its creator and not his private feelings; that which springs from the great calm and immobility of the world, not from the small sufferings of the Ego: everything that is monolithic, elementary, harsh, monumental".

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In these last words, there's a classic will. And we believe that precisely in this lies the secret of what is positive about German *neue Sachlichkeit*, even in comparison with other trends, which certainly coexist with the one whose spirit we have come to know through Matzke's book.

Beyond the "twilight of the gods", beyond the blaze of war and the miseries of the post-war period, it is the spirit of a new activist paganism⁵ that is making a comeback in the form of extreme, hard-line modernity. This spirit no longer inhabits Mediterranean temples, sun-drenched Ionian islands or the bright lights of Latium, but a

⁵ We have refrained from indicating which broader currents, outside even the new German generation that expresses its profession of faith in Matzke's book, carry the same ideas. On this subject, see our essay *Superamento del Romanticismo*, published in issues 1 and 2, 1931, of *Vita Nova* [This essay was republished in 1976 and 1979 by the "Fondation J. Evola" in Rome - Note by R.D.P.].

It's a new world where the demonism of the machine lives on, where a strange architecture has replaced the romantic, misty Nibelungian forests, definitively destroying Gothic fervor in favor of implacable rectilinearity, with rational, blindingly clean constructions made of glass and metal rather than stone, as bare and severe as asceticism. This world no longer reflects youth and joy, but the seriousness of life, which has matured under the steel helmet as it once did under the monastic gown. It is no longer epic in the sense of Pindar, with games, competitions and aerial dances, but it is epic in the theater of the vast world of things, above the oceans, in the silence of frozen peaks or desert horizons, on lucid machines that devour the wind or in Nordic interiors purified of all decoration, stripped and surgical to the point of archaizing desolation. And this world is forever closed to all remnants of sweet melancholy and nostalgic escapism.

"That which does not kill us makes us stronger; that which is not consumed regains its purity".

An era is coming to an end: the Romantic era. The fire burned away all the bark, laid bare all the essence. Along with Germany, another land has completed this process: Russia. There too, there is *neue Sachlichkeit*. There, too, the soul and the ego are to be liquidated as "prejudices of the bourgeois era". There too, everything subjective, arbitrary, personal, ideological and sentimental is regarded as an irrational and evil growth, to be eradicated by expedient processes of rationalization and mechanization controlled by the all-powerful state. There too, the tendency is towards an impersonal world of things rather than people, primordial, naked, devoid of skies. But in Russia, after the destruction of superstructures, what has been laid bare as the meaning of its *neue Sachlichkeit* is the old barbarian soul of the Slavic race, finally freed from the attempt at civilization undertaken for two centuries by the Tsars: it is the race of the faceless, the "beast without a face".

name", the acephalous, multiform "collective man" in the guise of the economic mechanism, in whose name all those who believe in "Soviet civilization" have sacrificed and forever destroyed everything that made them distinct, independent beings⁶.

In Germany, on the contrary, it's the clear ego-consciousness of an ancient warrior *paganitas* - the very same one that Hitler's sections, now bearing the black swastika, a sign of fire burning by its own virtue and of the reborn sun, evoke as a symbol, which the Christianity of the feudal Middle Ages was never able to fully bend, and which is finally reappearing, albeit through intellectual constructs, in the series of great idealist philosophies - it is this very consciousness that is reborn, simplified, metallized, displayed as something simple and inalienable even where the demon of cosmopolitan civilization reigns, as the soul and core of the *neue Sachlichkeit* of the Nordic.

What will be the destiny of this new generation? What will be the era it heralds, and to which it strives to lead the way? What significance does it have for Europe and its tradition, which faces a double threat from Russia in the East and America in the West?

Only the future - but perhaps a very near future - can provide the answer to these questions. Matzke writes: "We know that we are but a wave in a current without beginning or end, whose very essence is its rapid flow. But this wave - *our* wave - is the one that dominates now. We are advancing towards a peak, which for the moment has only valleys around it".

⁶ For this interpretation of Soviet Russia, cf. our essay *Americanismo e bolscevismo*, in *Nuova Antologia*, 1929, 10 (1^{er} mai). [Tr. fr. *Américanisme et bolchevisme*, in *Julius Evola, le visionnaire foudroyé*, Copernic, 1977, p. 71-102 - N.D.T.].

UI

1933

**CRITICAL REMARKS
ON NATIONAL SOCIALIST
RACISM**

Adolf Hitler's recent speech on the occasion of the National Socialist Party's cultural tour of Nuremberg, reproduced in the German press under the title: *Profession de foi héroïque*, deserves, in our opinion, some attention, because of the elements it offers for understanding this famous doctrine of race, which plays, as we know, such an important role in the ideology of the revolution bearing the swastika. These are official statements by the leader of this movement, intended to express in the most authoritative and unambiguous way what National Socialism borrows from this doctrine. Here, we highlight the main concepts outlined by Chancellor Hitler, and add a few brief comments.

The first point that stands out as a general premise is a curious blend of *naturalism* and *providentialism*. It is indeed strange that a genuine theological fatalism should be placed at the foundation of a heroic vision, one that is directly reminiscent of the Protestant doctrine of absolute predestination. Providence" - says Hitler verbatim - "has willed that men should not

are not equal, has determined a plurality of races, and for each of them has fixed particular qualities and characteristics, which cannot be modified without provoking degeneration and decadence". This predestination is twofold: it is both *biological* and *psychic*. The intimate biological and morphological laws obeyed by each particular race are matched by a worldview that may be present or latent, but which fundamentally remains unchanged over the centuries. From this stems a cultural and spiritual pluralism, which in turn openly opposes the universalist, Catholic-inspired views defended by the Centre party. There are as many truths and worldviews as there are races. Hitler clearly disputes that one can speak absolutely about the rightness, or otherwise, of a certain worldview. The truth is, it can only be spoken in relation to a given race, to that race's goals and will to exist and to power, and this truth - says Hitler - which "is most natural to a race, because it is innate to it and because it is adapted to the expression of its life, can mean in certain cases, for another people of different conformities, not only a serious danger, but outright extinction". Universalism and internationalism are synonymous with uncertainty, decadence of instinct, loss of contact with the deepest forces of the people to which one belongs. If we have the right to call Catholic the vision for which all ethnic difference belongs to a naturalistic and temporal plane, beyond which there exists a unique truth, a suprapolitical Christian society, according to which there is neither the Aryan nor the Semite, neither the European nor the Asian, and so on - then there is no doubt that Hitler's doctrine cannot be called "orthodox", provided, of course, that it is thought through to the end and developed without intellectual compromise.

A few critical remarks are in order here, however. First and foremost, we would be tempted to ask whether every truth

being linked to a race and true for it alone, the very truth according to which we believe in this pluralism must be deemed true for one race only, being dictated by the particular characteristics of that race, or whether it is true universally and in a supraracist mode for all races. All relativism, in general, is condemned to this wasp and contradiction: for in the very act by which it proclaims itself to be true, it assumes precisely, *mutatis mutandis*, the characters of an absolutism or universalism. But let's leave aside this objection, of a general and speculative nature. There is undoubtedly a positive aspect to Hitler's vision: it is a reaction against the rationalist, illuminist and democratic myths of European decadence. The doctrine of race is a value, insofar as it signifies the primacy of quality over quantity, of the differentiated over the formless, of the organic over the mechanical; insofar, above all, as it proposes the ideal of a profound and living unity between spirit and life, between thought and race, between culture and instinct. However, such an ideal is still - in terms of content - indeterminate; secondly, it is something that, in order to become value, needs to be liberated from both the fatalistic background and the naturalistic element.

On the first point, setting ourselves the task of achieving a creative synthesis between the innate idea of a race and the material conditions that impose themselves upon it, up to a "crystalline conformity to the goal" - *kristallklar erfüllten Zweckmässigkeit* - is not yet to resolve the fundamental problem, which is: what content, case by case, is to be realized in this synthesis? How can we recognize what is the task of one race, and therefore "true", and not of another race? Here, Hitler seems to show a propensity for a pragmatic, i.e. pragmatic and empiricist, solution, when he says, with regard to the correctness of a given vision, and therefore with regard to its right to be valid for a given race, that it is difficult to make a pronouncement, except in terms of the consequences and effects that flow from it among the men who have adopted it. But we fall

The famous predestination by "providence" becomes a myth that, at best, serves as an "idea-force", suggestively reinforcing a certain vocation or conviction; nothing is said, objectively, about a criterion that could justify *a priori* and link a certain mission or truth precisely to a certain race. It's a little odd that Hitler should conceive of heroism as a "given": just as one is born into the cat species or the elephant species, each of which has its own characteristics, so one would be born into heroic or non-heroic species, and the heroic man would think and act heroically by nature and by virtue of his racial characteristic, and even by predestination, not thanks to a free inner action. And since it is also said that any action not in conformity with the innate ethnic-spiritual characteristic is only an occasion for decadence, then would be an occasion for decadence, for example, any effort, in a race predestined not to be heroic, to adopt a heroic truth and rise heroically. This example may serve to illustrate the strange mixture we observe, on this point, in Hitler's theses.

But there's more. What distinguishes "Nordic-Aryan" man from the characteristics of man of other races is considered a fundamental point. However, this point *is not* resolved by Hitler - at least in the context of the speech to which we are referring here - since Hitler simply attributes as a characteristic of "North Aryan man" the fact of having always achieved, in ancient as in modern times, "a decisive synthesis between set tasks, purpose and given matter", by means of a free and creative mind. Indeed, this distinction is akin to that between those who can organically realize their own nature, in a specific lifestyle, and those who cannot. But aren't there lifestyles and lifestyles? Classically" realizing one's own way of being is an ideal that can be embodied on the basis of characteristics as varied as the way one lives.

whether Hellenic, Hebrew, Japanese or Germanic. The concept therefore remains indeterminate, and the specific features of the famous "Nordic-Aryan" element remain vague. On the positive side, Hitler alludes to an opposition due to the innate inclination of certain races to transcend the naturalistic element, the primitive substratum of existence, to transfigure the great traits of their own life. But this is no more than an allusion. All that relates, in ancient traditions, to the "supernatural" character of *Vârya* as the "twice-born" - *dvîja* - as opposed to *Vasurya*, the "dark" man dominated by the demonic element of his nature, is barely touched upon.

A further question arises from a critical point of view. Given that Hitler does not intend to educate seers capable of directly knowing the plans pre-established by divine providence for the various destinies and tasks of the races; given, as we have seen, that he does not provide a criterion for determining *a priori* the spiritual element that a given race will have to realize demiurgically - there is always the danger of ending up in mere naturalism, and therefore materialism. By this we mean that it will always be possible to suspect that this is not a matter of the race's creative and heroic adherence to the idea, but of the idea's mere subordination to what is presented as racial data. In other words, the mere constitution of a given race, what it happens to be naturalistically or (in an empirical sense) historically, and what it adopts by virtue of a crude will to existence and power, could become the sole criteria on the basis of which to decide, pragmatically, on the truth, validity and innate conformity, for the said race, of elements that in fact belong to a higher, meta-biological, spiritual or cultural plane.

We wish to emphasize the importance of this consideration, which clearly shows the stumbling block on which racism can end up breaking down. Especially today,

With forces of an inferior, collective nature erupting on all sides, it's essential to address this dilemma: *either it's the spirit that shapes a race* (more specifically, a nation), or it's *a race* (a nation) *that shapes the spirit*. More briefly still: *is there determination from above, or determination from below?* Those who believe that this is nothing but sophistry and captious reasoning are unaware of one of the main problems on the contemporary political horizon.

As we have shown on another occasion here, there are two distinct types of racism and nationalism: one is *spiritual*, the other is *materialistic* and corrupting*. The fact that they both oppose democratic and internationalist levelling, as well as liberal disintegration, should not in the least lead us to confuse them. In one case, we have the emergence of the prepersonal, and therefore undifferentiated, substratum of a given race, which, as the "soul of the race", is given a mystical halo, arrogates to itself a sovereign right and recognizes no value in the spirit, intellectuality and culture, which are thus transformed into instruments at the service of a temporal and political enterprise. In this case, race and nation really do provoke a destructive pluralism, giving rise to a multiplicity of antagonistic notions which, by their very nature, can admit of no higher, unitary point of reference. When racism takes on such an ethnically conditioned, collectivizing meaning, we can say, as we have, that it inevitably opposes any universalist vision, such as that of Catholicism, for example.

But it's a different matter when nation and race are truly, and not rhetorically, spiritual and transcendent concepts: when it's no longer blood, nor the collective soul, nor tradition in the vulgar, empirical sense, nor the brutal will to exist and to be.

* In the text: *pervertitore*.

of power of a group, which stands at the center - but rather, precisely, an *idea*, playing the role of a determining force that is exerted from above. This is not the place to go into it - and indeed we've discussed it at greater length in some of our books - but it must be stressed that every superior type of culture and state in traditional antiquity, *and especially among the Aryan peoples*, has always exhibited this character. In this case, the correctness of racism is limited to recognizing that the formative action of forces superior to nature on nature itself, i.e. on the naturalistic and biologically conditioned element, is so profound that it is reflected in a certain heredity and in a certain "form" or "style" of life, common to an entire group. But then it also remains clear that this heredity, this form or this style do not explain themselves, do not have their principle in themselves, are not a pure "given", as the characteristics of an animal species can be: on the contrary, they are apparitions, and like signs and consecrations of a conquest and of a higher strength.

Hitler writes: "Greeks and Romans immediately felt very close to the Germans, because their roots went back to a single fundamental race, and this explains why the immortal creations of the peoples of antiquity exerted an attraction on their racially related descendants". Now, it seems to us that this very example must lead to something more than mere racism. Indeed, Romans and Germans joined forces - and gave birth to the greatest type of culture Europe has ever known - at a time, the imperial Middle Ages, dominated not by racial particularism, *but by a universal idea*. The Middle Ages offer us precisely one of the clearest examples of supra-political, supranational unity acting formatively from above; of a single principle which, far from being shattered by ethnic egoisms and nationalist prevarications, applied to the different races in multiple for-

mes, but always capable, by virtue of a deep spiritual affinity, of founding a *corpus*, a grandiose and admirable *ordinatio ad unum*, in which the particular was not emptied of its substance, but spiritually integrated.

Although we have studied not only Hitler's writings, but also those of the leading National Socialist ideologists, in the final analysis we have not been able to see clearly which of the two directions we have just indicated is the one towards which the innermost soul of the swastika-bearing revolutionary current is directed. *Overcoming internationalist destruction, reintegrating into values such as quality, race and difference, not in the way that leads to a plurality of closed units and ideas placed at the service of matter and empirical politics, but on the contrary by making possible the formation of a higher, ecumenical reality, capable of virilely uniting nations in spirit without confusing them in bodies: this seems to us to be the fundamental problem of Europe's future.*

The future will tell what direction German reconstruction will eventually take. For the moment, one thing is certain: insofar as it has indissolubly associated the idea of nation and race with a superior universal idea - that of Rome - Fascism has already clearly established the symbol which alone is likely to have a positive value for the problem we have just been talking about.

IV

1934

THE NATIONAL-SOCIALIST STRUGGLE FOR THE "WORLD VISION"

National Socialism's latest watchword, it seems, is *Weltanschauung*, .e. "world view". In his recent speech to student delegations from all over the Reich, Hitler said: "Those who have seen National Socialism only as a political party struggling to exert a certain influence on the life of the state, have learned nothing from the past and have not understood the tasks of the future. And the Chancellor concluded by saying that the task of the new generation is not only to work to maintain everything physical, but also to create "works of truly immortal culture". In this ideology, "culture" is a concept very close to that of "worldview" - *Weltanschauung*. For his part, Alfred Rosenberg, who can be considered the leading theoretician of the Nazi movement, argued in the newspaper he edited, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, which is, incidentally, the official party organ, something even more significant about the relationship between the idea of the state and "worldview". In an in-depth text, he criticized the notion of the total state or

totalitarian, thus denying that, for National Socialism, the State is an autonomous reality, a creature endowed with a life of its own, to which everything else must be subordinated, as, for example, in the conception of a Treitschke. On the contrary, the state would be a *means*: the means by which, even if authoritatively, the national-socialist "worldview" must eventually permeate the German people completely. Similar theses were supported by other representatives of the movement, such as Minister Goering.

Since this is the case, it's only natural to ask what precisely - and officially - this *Weltanschauung* of which Nazism speaks consists. It's not an easy problem to solve. There is, of course, an ideological and philosophical system of history with fairly well-defined features, precisely that which Rosenberg set out in his massive work *The Myth of the ^{Twentieth} Century*. But the first edition of this book contains a disclaimer by the author, in which he declares that the ideas he supports in the book are not of an official party nature, but of a personal one. However, after the revolution this book was reprinted in a popular edition, distributed in thousands of copies and officially recommended to schools, Rosenberg himself being appointed head of all German educational and cultural organizations. It was this last fact that led the Catholic Church to blacklist Rosenberg's work. Rosenberg responded in kind with a speech to the Reichstag entitled: *Der Kampf um die Weltanschauung*, to which we'd like to return briefly now. Let's just say that not everyone will be satisfied with the results of this examination. The fact is that Rosenberg, due to the official nature of his speech, only partially reaffirmed what he had defended in his book, not without some very significant wavering, and under the influence of the strictly political aspect (which for us is not the most important part of his work).

of its activity. On the other hand, if we were to look elsewhere for better points of reference in relation to this famous *Weltanschauung*, we'd find none, it being understood that we want something "official". Expressions of harsh, abrupt racism are official - but to call them a "worldview" would be a misnomer. The orientations of the authors of the "anti-secular front", such as, for example, those who depend on the *Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt*¹, are of a higher order - but they are not "official". As for representatives of conservatism associated with Nazism, such as Everling, they seem to have been sidelined in Germany, despite their interesting and elevated ideological positions². The best thing to do, then, is to read what Rosenberg said in his recent speech, in which he also used some of Hitler's own ideas.

Rosenberg began by arguing that the World War had created a divide between two eras, which in reality were no longer connected by anything profound. The development of this assertion has both positive and negative aspects.

The positive aspect is the attack on liberalism and Marxism, in terms of the pre-war worldview. Fair, if not original, is Rosenberg's observation that the liberal thesis, which originally referred to an ideal of personality fulfillment, was in the end destructively inverted into a cosmopolitan rationalism detached from life, blood and all national reality, with the counterpart of the omnipotence of "enjuvenated" industry and

¹ On one of the best representatives of this group, Wilhelm Stapel, see our article: *Una teologia del nazionalismo*, in *La Vita Italiana*, 1933, issue 12.

² For a summary of these positions, see our study: *Il nuovo mito germanico del Terzo Regno*, in *Politica*, June-August 1932.

of finance. But the advent of such abstractism has systematically aroused the international proletarian masses against it, with the Marxist worldview and the Marxist call to class struggle. Rosenberg sees the absurdity in this: believing that a new order can be built by fomenting the revolt of one part against the whole. In this respect, Hitler added that there was also a biological counterpart: under the symbols of the socialist international, there was an appeal to something *elementally* biological common to all European strata, the revival of a kind of obscure sub-national and pre-national substratum, in the name of which a united front was proclaimed against other, biologically more differentiated elements, from which the multiplicity of European traditions derived. For having lost their original force, for having become mere politico-state ideas deprived of the living foundation that only *race* can give them, these other elements were on the verge of being overthrown. All this is contained in Hitler's speech to the youth. On this basis, Hitler asserts, and Rosenberg repeats, that Germany had *already* begun to decompose *before the war*. In our opinion, a rather singular assertion. Hitler blames pre-war German political thought for having neglected the national-racist presuppositions required of all social life, and thus virtually paved the way for decadence.

This is where the positive aspect of this ideology begins to fade in favor of the negative. There is an astonishing lack of awareness of the strength of what Rosenberg calls residual medieval forms in pre-war Germany, in the face of the strength of the Marxist and liberal element. Germany, when it was imperial and Prussian, in the proper sense of the term, showed itself to be well united, in a harmonious articulation of particular classes and kingdoms, with no need whatsoever for "racism", nor for that national "socialization" obsession that almost presents itself, among many ideologists, as a threat to the national identity.

The Nazi logues, like an obsessive idea: something better was enough for him, namely the principle of loyalty, fidelity, pride in service, military discipline. So, when Rosenberg tells us that "the German revolution began in August 1914", we could show him that we are capable, in the name of the Roman *suum unicuique tribuere*, of overcoming any partisan spirit, and prove him right: but in what sense? In the sense that we have to recognize that the general atmosphere in Europe, before the war, was polluted by Masonic democracy, by liberalism, by economic materialism, by hypocritical humanitarianism ; that such an atmosphere also, unfortunately, influenced part of the ideology adopted by the Allies, which found its conclusion in the infamous Wilson points - while the Central Empires entered the battle as aristocratic and still partly feudal nations, inheritors, at heart, of what had still been preserved of the "world view" proper to our common medieval civilization, albeit in inadequate forms of affirmation that were to lead to debacle. Yet this is not the sense in which Rosenberg says that the German revolution began in 1914 - just as we might say that the Italian revolution began in 1915, as the first instinctive reaction against the European political world and as the eruption of the heroic spirit, which was to become self-aware and justify itself by adopting the Roman and imperial ideals of Fascism. The meaning of Rosenberg's phrase is in fact equivocal: There's anti-liberalism and anti-Marxism here, but there also seems to be something of the aversion to the old German regime that some National Socialist speakers have already expressed on the 60th) anniversary of the founding of the Reich and on the Kaiser's last birthday, going so far as to say that not only the Hohenzollerns, but the Habsburgs and even the Hohenstaufens basically had a negative effect on the German people. That Rosenberg should, in some way

For us, the representative of the German Reich ideal is not Charlemagne, but his irreducible adversary, Widukind, leader of the Saxons. The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation is not the antecedent of the National Socialist Third Reich, and we see its precursors in all the great rebels hostile to this Empire, whether they acted within the framework of the ideal of a universal monarchy, like the great Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, or rose up against Caesar-papism, like Henry the Lion, Frederick William of Brandenburg, Luther, Hutter*, Frederick the Great or Bismarck. Today, at the turn of the millennia, we can declare that if the Saxon leader Widukind succumbed in the eighth century, he has returned as a victor, through Hitler, in the twentieth.

We won't attempt to point out how many disparate and contradictory themes are packed into these few characteristic lines. We'd just like to ask how it's possible to declare oneself an enemy of Charlemagne and exalt Frederick II, both representatives of the same idea, with the aggravating circumstance that the Court of Sicily and Frederick's innovations in feudal law herald the "rationalism" of those who, although not yet "enjuvenated", should hardly be in the odor of sanctity among the Nazis. On the other hand, what does it mean to say that Hitler is a kind of victorious reincarnation of Widukind? Who is the Charlemagne against whom this *avatar* would have taken his revenge? For the freedom of the German people, fine - but for the German nation? The reality is that we can only regard the Nazi revolution as positive insofar as it is a counter-revolution, an anti-Weimar and anti-Versailles, as well as a revolt against liberalism and

* Jacob Hutter: founder of an Anabaptist splinter group, burned to death in 1536.

socialism. As for the historical appendices just mentioned, they make no sense, or only a negative one. And who can fail to see how risky it is, on Rosenberg's part, to reduce the true German tradition to nothing better than a tradition of "rebels": precisely as a certain French ideology à la Massis desires.

In his *Mythe du XX^e siècle*, Rosenberg has put forward some courageous ideas, which we sincerely appreciate, and we know that he was interested in similar ideas that we ourselves defended in Italy. That's why we don't like to see him indulge in such doctrinal vacillations, which are understandable but not justifiable. One can understand, for example, the *raison d'être* of a dialectical or tactical opposition of Nazism to certain elements of the old regime, but it's a long way from that to a trial against the *principle* of this regime, and one can only take this great step on the lowest level of empirical politics, not on the doctrinal level. The concern to preserve the integrity of a race and a people is legitimate, but when this concern becomes fanaticism, uniting in the same negation *Vanti-race* (internationalism) and *supra-race* (the old ideal of Empire), it turns into a dangerous deviation. This is why the definition of this famous National Socialist "worldview" remains ambiguous. The only clear-cut feature seems to be that it *overcomes liberalism and socialism, on the one hand, and aristocratic and imperial traditionalism, on the other, in the name of a new unity between race and spirit to be achieved in the socialized national totality.*

Rosenberg refers to the "inner heroism" of solving problems even in the face of the most deeply rooted mental habits, and says that, on the basis of this courage, it must first be recognized that "blood and character, race and soul are but various designations of a single essence".

The first consequence in this order is that soul and race condition each other, that a soul is born with a given race and enters decadence when that race enters decadence". This should be the presupposition of a whole new interpretation of history, of which Rosenberg gives a brief example in his speech by referring to Greece, but which he expounded at length in *Le mythe du XX^e siècle*.

This brings us back to the previous point, where we are obliged to ask whether or not the theses presented in this book are to be considered orthodox when it comes to defining the national-socialist vision of life. Indeed, the idea of interdependence between the soul and body of a given race, although accepted, remains formal, undifferentiated, valid as a mere schema. What is essential and decisive, however, is *the doctrine of race within the framework of a philosophy of history*: only then can we overcome this indeterminacy and arrive at a positive content for the Nazi worldview, valid for the German race and not for other races. And the only attempt at such a definition that is not limited to mere anthropology - as is the case with Günther's work³ - but also develops into a philosophy of culture, is precisely that of Rosenberg. Hitler

³ Cf. Hans F. K. Günther, *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes*, Munich, 1926; *Rassenkunde Europas*, Munich, 1930; *Rassengeschichte des hellenischen Volkes*, Munich, 1929; *Die nordische Rasse bei den Indogermanen Asiens*, Munich, 1934. - [The following works by Günther have been translated into French: *Le mariage*, Payot, 1952; *Platon eugéniste et vitaliste*, Pardès, Puiseaux, 1987; *Religiosité indo-européenne*, Pardès, Puiseaux, 1987, with a rather critical presentation by Julius Evola - first published in the journal *II Conciliatore* on August 15, 1970 - which reads: "Günther makes a serious reduction in the heritage of Indo-European spirituality, denying or ignoring what we might call the "dimension of transcendence" in the human order no less than in the divine order" (p. 22) - EDITOR'S NOTE].

on other occasions, for example in his speech *Profession de foi héroïque (Profession of Heroic Faith)*, he too has attempted to explore the content of the notion of "Nordic-Aryan man", albeit unsatisfactorily⁴: for to speak of "creative heroism", of a "decisive synthesis between set tasks, objective and given material", of "crystalline conformity to innate purpose", and so on, is once again to speak of formal characters and instrumental capacities, and not really to define a *content* that is specific to one race and not to other races. In short, we know that the National Socialist vision is one that supports the mind-race equation, but Hitler tells us nothing about what precisely are the terms of this equation in relation to the *Weltanschauung* that the Nazi state should spread among the German people.

It is Rosenberg, on the other hand, who could tell us more, since he has elaborated a philosophy of the history of the primordial Nordic race, from its Arctic prehistory to its multiple ramifications in the Indo-European and Indo-Germanic cultures of historical times, and even into the Middle Ages and the modern era. This is certainly not the place to examine in detail the soundness of Rosenberg's reconstruction. Suffice it to say that we ourselves have had occasion to deal with the same subject and, on the basis of the results of our research⁵, we can affirm that, if it is legitimate to give, through a comparative study of oral and written traditions, myths and memories of the most diverse peoples of Antiquity, a sufficiently positive content to the idea of a primordial Nordic culture (to avoid certain equivocations, we have preferred to speak of a "primordial Nordic culture"), it is also legitimate to speak of a "primordial Nordic culture".

⁴ Cf. our *Osservazioni critiche sul "razzismo" nazionalsocialista*, in *La Vita Italiana*, 1933, number 11. - [This is the article by Evola that precedes this one in the present collection - Note by R.D.P.].

⁵ This is our recent work: *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno*, Milan, 1934.

However, as Rosenberg, Günther (even more so than the former) and, to a lesser extent, Wirth⁽⁶⁾ have done to varying degrees, it's problematic to posit an interdependence between cultural and ethnic factors, right from the start of what are strictly speaking historical times. On the other hand, it is downright arbitrary to make the spirit of this prehistoric civilization the monopoly of any of the races that have emerged, through all sorts of ebb and flow, in the modern world. In other words, the "Nordic" myth, in the form in which it may objectively have some consistency, essentially refers to a generic type of civilization and spirituality, which can only be abused in the service of the exclusivisms of modern racism and nationalism. The "Nordic" element, in the sense indicated above, is present not only among the ancient Scandinavians, but also in archaic China, India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, ancient Mexico, and even in the Philistine current of Semitic cultures (as the anti-Semitic Rosenberg admits), etc. What is "Germanic" is what is "Germanic". What is "Germanic" thus becomes only a species of the "Nordic" genus, and the right of the latter to refer integratively to the former is no greater than the right that other races, starting with our own, can claim for themselves.

In fact, racist ideologists are playing a kind of dialectical *yo-yo ad usum delphini*. From bottom to top: from Germanic to pure Nordic. Then from top to bottom: once you've discovered horizons and values that are basically supra-ethnic, collected testimonies from several groups of peoples, for-

⁶ Herman Wirth, *Der Aufgang der Menschheit*, léna, 1928. On this book, see our article *Aspetti del movimento culturale della Germania contemporanea*, in *Nuova Antologia*, 1^{er} janvier 1930.

But the Nazis were faced with a dilemma: they had to find a way to deal with the fact that the "world view" of today's Germany was eminently German. But it doesn't add up, and the Nazis are faced with a dilemma: either they maintain their exclusivism, in which case the notion of "worldview" remains vague and indeterminate, not to say reduced to mere biological and, at best, ethico-artistic notions ; or they define this notion by means of the "Nordic" element within the framework of a philosophy of history of the type of Rosenberg or Wirth, and then they have no right to claim this monopoly, nor to prevent the first term in the mind-race equation from having a broader logical and historical meaning than the second.

Our own research has also highlighted another point: if they really understood how the "solar" and "royal" element was always peculiar to "Nordic" (of course, in the supra-ethnic sense) types of civilization, then the Nazis would also have to attach greater importance to various aspects of the old German aristocratic tradition than they seem willing to do by means of certain "social" and "dictatorial" constructions whose exclusively Jacobin flavor cannot be denied, despite everything.

Let's turn now to the last point of Rosenberg's discourse, which is affected by the Church's condemnation of his work. We cannot dwell here on the fact that to give a "Nordic" definition of Nazi *Weltanschauung* means to arrive at theses clearly opposed to Catholic, and Christian in general, views. Rosenberg made no secret of this opposition, even indulging in the harshest attacks on the Church in his *Myth of the Twentieth Century*. On this subject, however, it has to be said that the Church could also be right, as when it decided to stigmatize the aspect of simple blood mysticism presented by

the book and assert the right to a higher truth than that proper to an ethnic particularism. But the real opposition arises when this inferior aspect is eliminated, when what is "Nordic" is given the meaning of a "spiritual category", i.e. a universal type of attitude towards the world, life and the sacred, an attitude which - when thought through thoroughly, and precisely because of its immanent, heroic and "solar" foundations - sees the Christian spirit as something inferior, in the Nietzschean sense of the word, heroic and "solar" - sees in the Christian spirit something inferior, in the Nietzschean sense, a Semitic-Plebeian *pathos* and a servility to the divine foreign to the virile and aristocratic orientation proper to the highest forms of Indo-European cultures, present in ancient Rome and, albeit in the form of a compromise, in medieval Gibelinism. On this level, there's not much to be done. Our own research, the results of which appear in the book we have already mentioned, confirms and reinforces this incompatibility. And this incompatibility sometimes gets Rosenberg into trouble.

As the official speaker of the Reichstag and head of the German educational organizations, Rosenberg sought a solution through false distinctions of competence. But he found himself faced with a dilemma similar to the one mentioned above: if confrontation is to be avoided, if the anti-Christianity of the National Socialist *Weltanschauung* is not to be openly declared (and let's stress that Rosenberg associates the Catholic Church and the Evangelical Church in his denial), then this *Weltanschauung* returns to an indeterminate state, losing its true scope and integral content, even if it doesn't descend to the level of vulgar racism, against which the Church has every right to defend itself, and which makes the German bishop's assertion that it wasn't worth escaping Bolshevik barbarism to fall into Germanic barbarism so piquant. Either one holds firmly to the wholly "Nordic" "worldview", and

then we need to have the courage to take a clear stand against Christian denominations, an adventure we don't know how far a Party, however strong, can risk.

In any case, when Rosenberg says: "The struggle in the name of dogma is over, and the great struggle for values has begun", he's not really breaking the deadlock. After all, what are dogmas if not transcendent values in an authoritarian guise? Other useless parries: "The National Socialist State cannot be the instrument of a particular religious denomination". And: "Party is one thing, faith is another. When a National Socialist puts on the brown shirt, he ceases to be a Protestant, a Catholic, a member of the German Church, etc., he is merely a militant member of the German nation. As a private person, however, he has the right to take whatever stand he likes on religious matters. What indeed can all this mean? Hasn't it been said over and over again that the Nazi state is not simply a political and agnostic reality, but a means for the affirmation of spiritual content, for a revolution in "worldview"? Didn't Rosenberg say that Nordic blood mysticism should be given the same religious value as the ancient sacraments? What limits can really separate religious confession and "worldview"? In a kind of new "double truth" theory, Rosenberg tries to find a way out, and to reconcile the politician and the author of an anti-Christian work within himself. But the dilemma already mentioned continues to dog him: either everything falls back into simple racism as human zootechnics and pure social-political discipline, agnostic in the face of the most decisive problems for the mind and history - and to speak of "world vision" and "revolution" is, in this case, abusive. Or we can sensibly speak of Nordic *Weltanschauung* in the sense, now defined, of a spiritual category relating to the highest solar traditions of the Indo-European cycle, and we must then

call on the "inner courage" that Rosenberg spoke of, and prepare for confrontations far more important and dangerous than those involving Marxism or international Judaism.

So, overall, that is to say, in the whole of the problematic, the main elements of which we have sought to establish in these notes, we can find no better title than that of Rosenberg's speech: *The struggle for a worldview*. Provided it's an inner, spiritual battle, rather than an external or national one. Obstructions of a biological materialism that, despite everything, feels Darwinian banalities; nationalist *pathos* mixed with nostalgia for the free spiritual horizons of origins; instinctive reactions against the regime that led to the adventure of war and equivocal tendencies towards "socialization" ; anti-internationalist and anti-universalist condemnation, but also confusions between antination and supranation (empire); aspirations towards a more concrete, heroic, virile and original spirituality than Christian spirituality and, at the same time, disregard for the ecumenical ideal of Rome and the threat of a new "Gallicanism" of a naturalistic and pagan type : myth and biology, tradition and revolution - all of these factors are still chaotically at play in the German soul engaged in its struggle for "world vision". Their confused presentation suggests that this struggle is still in its infancy. It will take men of unsuspected inner courage and strength of will, men capable of detaching themselves from the contingent and the passionate, capable of drawing from adherence to true principles the energy for absolute action, both spiritual and practical, if this struggle is to reach its conclusion in a way that is salutary for the destiny of a race which, after the Roman race, has contributed to the greatness of the West.

1935

NAZISM

ON THE WAY TO MOSCOW?

The events of June 30 in Germany¹ had the following overall significance: a) the elimination of "cumbersome" elements of various kinds; b) the elimination of an extreme left-wing tendency (assault sections, the "second wave" around Röhm previously denounced by von Papen); c) the elimination of an extreme right-wing tendency aimed at tactically using left-wing elements to block the road to National Socialism, and then to assert itself in its place (von Schleicher).

Nazism has been oscillating since June 30, but seems to be slowly tilting to the right, albeit moderately. The center of the movement seems to be shifting from the influence of the assault sections to that of the Reichswehr. But this may not be a completely smooth evolution (see rumours

¹On the subject of these events, we feel it appropriate to report what Evola wrote in his *Notes on the Third Reich*, which appear at the end of the book *Le fascisme vu de droite* (Totalité, 1981), pp. 123-124: "One episode that must be recalled here, and which shows the double face of Hitlerism in this first period, is that of the events of June 30, 1934. On that day, and precisely during the night that came to be known as the 'night of the long knives', a number of

on the appointment of Goering to replace von Papen), and it's possible that at some point there will be a reaction from properly "revolutionary" elements, some of whom had already accused Hitler of "treason". It is therefore of some interest to know what these elements want, what their ideology is, and what ideals they would like to return Germany to through National Socialism.

To do this, we'll use a book that appeared on the eve of the Nazi revolution, a book that enjoyed full freedom of expression; a book that clearly and courageously defines ideas that, while they may not be surfacing as they are today, are nonetheless cherished by the tendencies of Nazism that have been alluded to. We are referring to Cari Dyrssen's book *The Message from the East*, subtitled: *Fascism, National Socialism and Prussianism**. Published by the Korn publishing house, of

personalities were eliminated, using expeditious methods, mainly by the SS. Among them were elements with different political leanings: in addition to ex-Chancellor von Schleicher, right-wingers such as von Böse, von den Decken, von Alvensleben and von Papen's secretary Edgard Jung. But the main significance of the operation was that, among the S.A., the Brown Shirts, led by Ernst Röhm, the idea of a "second revolution" or a second moment in the revolution had spread; they denounced the survival within the Reich of "reactionary" groups, those of the Right, and Hitler's connivance with the "barons of the army and industry" (...) But June 30, 1934 saw the crushing of this radical party current and its alleged plot. Röhm, head of the S.A. and a former close friend of Hitler, and Gregor Strasser, organizer of the Berlin Brown Shirts, lost their lives" [Note by R.D.P.].

* Original title: *Die Botschaft des Ostens. Faschismus, Nationalsozialismus und Preussentum*. The preface is dated autumn 1932, but the book was not published until 1933. Born in 1888 and dying after 1945, Cari Dyrssen belonged to the "mystical Prussianism" trend within the National Revolutionary movement.

In Breslau, the attractive cover features a photographic montage of the silhouettes of Mussolini, Hitler and Cardinal Gasparri against a red background, with a parade of assault sections in the background, carrying their unfurled standards and passing under the Brandenburg Gate.

The author's considerations are essentially concerned with simple economic policy, betraying a narrow perspective to say the least. For Dyrssen, there are two opposing worlds, more or less separated by the Rhine, and referred to as "East" and "West". The "West", for him, means the world of liberalism, democracy, internationalism and, above all, *capitalism*. North America, France and England, with their principles of free trade and financial imperialism, would belong to it. Typical of this system, in the final analysis, would be the principle of individualism, internally, and the principle of imperialism, externally. Its liberalism would be nothing but hypocrisy at the service of hegemonic or destructive action against other peoples.

For Dyrssen, the "Orient" would be, first and foremost, Germany: an industrial, capitalist type of state would be opposed by an essentially agrarian state; individualism would be replaced by a social spirit; and the imperialist, internationalist economy would be replaced by a consumer economy, directly linked to blood and soil.

According to our author, the meaning of the world war would have been that of an assault by the West against the East. It would mark the critical moment when the individualist and capitalist idea would have blown up the natural limits of its own world and become - if we may say so - explosive, in its attempt to break and bend to its system - indifferent to land and blood - the part of Europe that still resisted it or could resist it. Here, too, Dyrssen is arbitrary, or at least very one-sided. It is precisely German circles

and Nazis, who blamed Wilhelmian Germany, which was allegedly under attack from the "West", for certain underhand agreements with big capitalism and German heavy industry; while we know that "territorial claims" and the principle of nationalities played a dominant role in Allied ideology right up to the peace treaties.

In any case, such confusions pale into insignificance when Dyrssen comes to examine the post-war situation and, above all, the meaning of fascism.

In the ideological, social and political chaos of the post-war period, two main antagonistic currents would have emerged: a *reformist-Roman* current and a *Germanic-revolutionary* current, corresponding respectively to *fascism* (as Dyrssen imagines it) and *national socialism* (as Dyrssen hopes and as it is in the minds of left-wing activist elements).

For Dyrssen, Fascism was not truly revolutionary, because it did not lead to a type of state that was truly different from the "Western" type, based on the private capitalist economy. Relying on the prejudices of some outdated or short-sighted historical-materialist schema, our author believes that ancient Rome, and the law and practice formulated by the Roman Church, would never have emerged from the "Western" world. The Roman ideal of *pax et justitia* would have been no more than a system of social equilibrium and moderation based on essentially individualistic and capitalist premises, and the social ideology of the Church would not have followed a fundamentally different course. For Dyrssen, however, fascism does not deviate from this tradition; having "domesticated" - *bezähmt* - its original revolutionary and "socialist" impulse, it would not be a revolt against the old system, but merely a correction of it. Fascism accepts private property and initiative, and only erases the harshness and imbalances inherent in simple class struggle and liberal capitalism.

unbridled, leads to an *authoritarian* capitalism supported by state control, by means of which the fundamental elements of the old "Western" system, no less than recognized, are strengthened and shielded from the salutary crisis that was about to overthrow them elsewhere. Revolution" was avoided. Moreover, Fascism would retain its imperialist tendency, "a vocation inseparable from the Roman tradition": not content to stand as a national political ideal, it would present itself, directly or indirectly, as an example beyond Italy's borders. But insofar as Rome serves precisely as the salvation of dying Western capitalism, it must be seen as the new danger for the German anti-capitalist and "socialist" tradition. For Dyrssen, National Socialism would be called upon to revolutionarily defend this tradition, to continue the old movement of emancipation from Rome - *los von Rom!* - which began with Luther in the religious sphere.

In fact, for our author, the Lutheran revolt is closely related in spirit to that of the German peasants, already seen by various German racists as the last flash of the Nordic will to independence: the peasants rising up against the nobility and the clergy, demanding that the rest of the land be returned to them within a communist framework, stand alongside the Lutheran rejection of authoritarian individualism, imperialism, urbanization and the Roman glorification of the "world". Basically, these are two aspects of an essentially "socialist" turn of events that - again for Dyrssen - lies at the very basis of the Prussian tradition, which is agrarian and anti-capitalist, with property having only a social function and kings appearing as "servants of the people". National Socialism should therefore decide to be a "social-Prussian" revolution against the West and against "Rome". A revolution not only against the attempt, set in motion by the German revolution of 1918, to reduce Germany to a colony in the service of "Western" Europe, governed by the "West", but also against the "West" and "Rome".

by the principles of capitalism, democracy and internationalism, but against the conservative, "feudal" residues of the German economy and against fascist "authoritarian capitalism". Hitler was faced with a choice: fascism or national socialism, "West" or "East", the continuation of the capitalist system, the last product of the individualist conception of economy and state, or the radical rejection of this system and the formation of a completely new economic and political structure.

Dyrssen continues: either a heroic vision, or an economic vision of life. The German vocation is the refusal of cosmopolitan civilization, because this vocation thinks in terms of collectivities and not of individualities, because it aspires not to wealth but to strength, because it places value in people and not in things, cultivating combativeness not in the service of imperialism but in defense of the homeland, despising the "cadaverous obedience" of Catholic-Jesuit morality and being revolutionarily inclined towards outrageous struggle for the glory of its race.

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It seems to us that there are many gross errors and confusions here. Like so many other racist authors who, in truth, do no credit to their country's culture, and who today, following in the footsteps of Chamberlain² and other dilettantes, repeat phrases from this

² Houston Stewart Chamberlain, author of *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Munich, 1899 [tr. fr. *La genèse du XIX^e siècle*, two volumes, Payot, Geneva, 1913 - N.D.T.]. Rosenberg has written (*Houston S. Chamberlain*, Munich, 1927) on this author; see also: J. Evola, *Il mito del sangue*, Hoepli, Milan, 1937, p. 57-79 [Note by

Not only does Dyrssen fail to understand the meaning of Romanity and Fascism, but he also appears to be completely ignorant of the best traditions of the German people. First of all, when he states in all seriousness that the goal of the new fascist system is "power through wealth", and that the values of ancient Romanity were reduced to individualism, capitalism and urbanization, while loyalty to the land, asceticism of strength and heroism would be a more or less Prussian monopoly - he really does speak irresponsibly, not to say ignorantly. After all, who doesn't know that the union of sword and plough, the double face of Mars, god of war and agriculture, the sacred relationship of the patricians with their native land, and so on, were typical characteristics of the original pure Romanity, and not of the decadence introduced into Rome by foreign elements? If Dyrssen's perspectives weren't so narrow-minded, if his sectarian exclusivism weren't the result of sheer mental stupidity, we might - it's true - recognize that we're dealing here with an Indo-European heritage in general, and therefore neither with his people nor with ours in particular. But this would only be a way of showing, once again, the one-sided nature of the two oppositions, to make it obvious to Dyrssen how much of what he denies is in what he affirms, and vice versa.

When it comes to fascism, Dyrssen's blindness is no less. All the warrior education that fascism seeks to impart to the younger generation by choosing a highly significant motto: "Life is militia and militia is life"*; the fascist fight against urbanization; its precise and concrete back-to-the-land and land reclamation initiatives; the new provisions in

* In the sense, of course, of *vita homini super terram militia est*. The Italian *milizia* has no exact equivalent in French, when it designates the combat waged by a group of armed men united by an idea, and not the group as such. Some authors use a neologism: "militance".

The aim is to turn - as Dyrssen himself wants to do - the formula "property is theft" into another formula: "property is a duty", and so on and so forth. An authoritarian system at the service of capitalism and a simple ideal of economic life? Not in the least. The authoritarian system of fascism reverses the material subordination of politics to economics, and thus reaffirms the latter's subjection to the former, without falling into the "socialist" error, or the liberal error, but by proposing to a differentiated economic reality, free but disciplined, the superior ideal of the "nation" and, ultimately, of the "empire" as a supra-economic, supra-individual, spiritual point of reference ; it's the ideal that respects property, not as a tribute to "Western" truth, but because property is one of the material conditions indispensable to the dignity and autonomy of the individual.

It's precisely at this point that we discover two other serious confusions committed by Dyrssen. The first is the confusion between *personality* and *individuality*. The second is the confusion between *internationalism* and *universality*. Incidentally, these are errors that we have had occasion to point out here, but which nonetheless persist tenaciously in the prevailing Nazi ideology.

On the first point, we'll repeat that it's possible to fight liberalism and individualism without being in any way hostile to the higher ideal of *personality*, and that this is even a condition for truly understanding this ideal. Socialism and individualism are, in fact, just two aspects of the same materialistic, anti-qualitative, levelling decadence that has taken place in recent times. The ideal of free, differentiated, virile personalities, as elements in the composition of an organic, hierarchical political reality in which each individual has his or her own function and dignity, is superior to both socialism and liberalism. And this ideal is first and foremost Indo-European, then classical, classico-Roman and, finally,

(Middle Ages). So Dyrssen can have a field day with the "West": liberal, democratic and individualistic. Neither Fascism nor Romanism have anything in common with such a West, which is in fact only a relatively recent apparition, born of the ferment that has decomposed our common culture, a ferment that it is an abuse to identify with the "West". And when Dyrssen opposes socialism as "working-class solidarity", which merely expresses a feeling of inferiority that consists in envying the possessor's goods, with a socialism not of "having", but of "being", a socialism not of hatred, but of dignity, founded on a "spirit of aristocratic comradeship", in the superior sense, on contempt for wealth, on a return to the land and on the idea that all city opulence is poison - he deludes himself into having defined a "Prussian" tradition in this way, since it is in fact a question of values that our tradition knew, that fascism has taken over to a certain extent and which, finally, in medieval times, were a common heritage for us. *The fact is, then, that Dyrssen calls "Western" what is merely a recent decadence of the true, traditional West; and when he tries to lure us into such a decadence, using every pretext in the name of anti-Rome, the truth is that his points of reference, precisely, must be qualified as "Western", in the sense of this recent perversion and decadence.*

Indeed, what is the soul of Dyrssen's "Prussian" anti-Romanticism - if we exclude "anti-capitalism", which is his *idée fixe*? It's *Luther*. He was the one who first fomented the individualist, anti-hierarchical revolt that would gradually translate into the political sphere, leading from the revolt of the German Princes against the universal, "Roman" principle of the Empire, to the revolt of democratically conceived nations, and on to contemporary individualist disintegration. And instead of highlighting what is, in its most traditional sense

Dyrssen, on the contrary, displays a total ignorance of this tradition, in the name of Luther, "Prussian socialism", anti-capitalism and the "message from the East" - where else? in *the arms of Lenin*. No more, no less.

Indeed, Dyrssen questions whether there is, after all, a true spiritual frontier between the Elbe and the Urals, and, without hesitation, asserts that Bolshevik Russia is today the only great power to have openly sided against the "West", against Rome and capitalism. He claims that for a German determined to rid himself of all foreign and "Western" influences that alter his essence, the fear of Bolshevization is a childish fear. Taken as a whole, Nazism's "social" revolution can only lead as far as Bolshevism did in terms of capitalism and individualism. Nazism and Bolshevism would have in common the ideal of a socialized, armed agricultural state, where the old Germanic *VAhnende* system would correspond in new forms, in a native soil collectivism, to the old Slavic *mir*. But that's not all: in the final apotheosis of the "message from the East" desired by Dyrssen the hierophant, Luther and Lenin embrace fraternally. Soviet atheism - our author quietly argues - is nothing but a poor scarecrow we're being led around by the nose. It would in fact reflect the very spirit of the Reformation: it would be a rebellion against an official religiosity that was external, Romanized, worldly, authoritarian and tied to earthly riches - but it would be precisely from this that a new, authentic, inner, free and social religiosity could develop, responding precisely to the aspirations of Luther, prophet of the German people liberated from the Roman yoke.

Thus, after the very timid flights represented by his conception of an "aristocratic socialism" (whose origins, however, can be seen in the earliest form of

of our Roman senate) and his references to the asceticism of strength and the Prussian heroic style, Dyrssen falls heavily back to earth. In saying "no" to the ideal of Roman *universality*, and in his infantile fear of a so-called "fascist imperialism" (as if Mussolini hadn't spoken of this empire "which to realize itself doesn't even need to conquer a square kilometer of territory" - and as if, on the other hand, *Deutschland über alles, über alles in der Welt* were the song of 1'...German agrarian anti-imperialism), he falls into the arms of Bolshevik *Vinternationale*. Dyrssen, in fact, seems unaware that, within the framework of sovietism, the notions of patria and nation have no place, *a fortiori* the notion of tradition by virtue of which the land can be seen as something other than mere matter and a few clods ; that the communist abolition of private property is just one episode in a much broader action whose ideal is the abolition of the very notion of personality, of any autonomous faculty and of any interest in any way detached from that of the all-powerful, materialized collective man, who has appeared to "redeem" humanity in an anonymous, proletarianized mass.

So we think that's all there is to it. It would be all too easy to demolish such an ideology point by point. But if it has no logical value, it does have a *symptomatic* value. History shows us that it is not the most well-founded ideas that have been the most active, but those that have best contained the suggestive power of an idea-force, serving, as it were, as a crystallization center for the confused tendencies of a given milieu. In addition to Dyrssen, we could quote other Nazi authors, whose assertions transpire a similar mentality. For example, Darré, a Nazi minister, is the author of a successful book entitled *La paysannerie comme source de vie de la race nordique** (*Peasantry as the source of life for the Nordic race**).

* Original title: *Das Bauerntum als Lebensquell der Nordischen Rasse*, Munich, 1929.

a quasi-official character in Germany, where the same whims of an "agrarian socialism", the same anguish over imperialism, which would never have been a Nordic principle, the same tendencies against the notion of private property and against capitalism, all recurred; And Darré is also the man who, in a well-known speech, professed the same ignorance of German aristocratic traditions as Dyrssen, coming to regard not only the Hohenzollerns and Habsburgs, but even the Hohenstaufens, as traitors to the Germanic race. In these columns, readers will have read our analysis of the resurgence of anti-Roman and racist law, of "social law based on blood". Perhaps he is already aware that in Germany we no longer refer to Charlemagne as Charles the Frank, and that he, who had taken up the principle of Roman universality, is seen as the cause of the worst evils that have befallen Germany? Nor is the reader unaware that Rosenberg declared that the National Socialist "Third Reich" had as its antecedent, not the tradition of the ancient *Sacrum Imperium*, but that of all rebels to the Roman and imperial principle, starting with Widukind, the Saxon chieftain, proud enemy of Charlemagne, who was certainly defeated in the 8th century, but is now destined to be victoriously reborn in the person of Adolf Hitler.

We could go on and on with quotes like these. Anti-aristocracy, socialism, smoky "Nordic" tradition as a pretext for anti-tradition, crude anti-Roman passion leading to philobolshevik attitudes.

Taken as a whole, this informs us about the nature of one of the potentialities inherent in Nazism, a negative potentiality, whose influence today seems to be gradually waning: but an influence which cannot yet be said to have been completely overcome, and one which is bound to lead, at some point, to a specific stance in the practical, political sphere. The definitive face that Germany will present is also interesting-

n view of the role this country plays, directly or indirectly, as a central European region, the overall evolution of civilization on our continent, it is to be hoped that the overcoming of such tendencies will be accomplished as clearly and rapidly as possible. We have a very specific path to follow, which has nothing to do with the Freemasonic, democratic and liberal West, nor with the Bolshevist and socialist "East". So, it is not for us, but for Germany itself, and for the role it can still play in the future, that we must express the hope that its best forces will similarly be able to lead it beyond this paralyzing opposition, and thus onto the path of genuine reconstruction.

VI

1935

PARADOXES OF OUR TIME : RACIST PAGANISM = LIBERAL ILLUMINISM

Alfred Rosenberg responds. The author of the famous *Myth of the XXth Century*, which has had so many repercussions and provoked so much controversy both inside and outside Germany, has decided to launch a counter-attack with a pamphlet entitled *To the Obscurantists of Our Time*^{*}, which has just been published in Munich.

Rosenberg warns that he does not intend to speak as a Nazi politician on this subject. He thus allows us to deal with his response in a way that is entirely independent of our political relationship with Germany. But it is no less true that Rosenberg's fundamental book, *The Myth*, has become a kind of spiritual guide in many sectors of the new German youth, sheltered from the well-intentioned tolerance of the Nazis.

¹ The article reproduced here, taken from the review *Lo Stato*, did not appear under Evola's signature, nor under one of his pseudonyms; it is signed with an asterisk. But there are many reasons, concerning both its form and content, for its plausible attribution to Evola [Note by R.D.P.J.

♦ Original title: *An die Dunkelmänner unserer Zeit* [N.D.T.].

It is not simply the private profession of faith of an individual thinker, but something that has the character of a "current". So it's interesting to see what Rosenberg has to say in defense of his positions against the attacks made on them, especially from the Catholic side. This new work, in fact, is essentially a response to a publication by the Diocese of Münster, by a group of ecclesiastical specialists, who, without entering the fray as such, without really opposing Rosenberg's central conceptions, nevertheless wished to denounce all the errors and all the historical and doctrinal distortions contained in his main work.

We had hoped that time would have served Rosenberg well, and that various criticisms and spin-offs would have prompted him to delve deeper into his theses, freeing them from numerous limitations and unsympathetic militant attitudes. In fact, the opposite is true. Quite the opposite occurred. Rosenberg focused precisely on the most negative and narrow-minded aspects of his book. In so doing, he has revealed the danger it represents, if German youth continues to allow itself to be suggested by it, instead of returning to the path of equilibrium and normalcy.

We won't go into detail here, especially as Rosenberg's response boils down to a petty war fueled by often unsympathetic reprisals, and this because he uses the slightest pretext to move from the doctrinal to the political level, to discover in his Catholic opponents epigones of the former members of the Center Party, the enemy of National Socialism, thus relying on the commonplaces of a misunderstood extremist and racist nationalism.

*It's the tone that makes the song** - and what's interesting to note in Rosenberg's furious brochure,

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

is simply the level to which the famous Germanic neopaganism descends in the hands of this author. We are indeed in the presence, no more and no less, of the anticlerical arguments of the blessed times of Podrecca's Donkey, Voltaire and company, of the claims of "free thought" and, in short, of the secular and rationalist Enlightenment. The same commonplaces against the Inquisition (why doesn't Rosenberg tell us about the torture methods in use in German cities at the same time?), the same polemic against the "obscurantism" of Catholic doctrine, the same contestation of Constantine's donation and, consequently, of the Church's right to temporal power, the same conception of all that is rite and supernaturalism as the invention of priests to make themselves obeyed, to dominate and enslave consciences; the same unfortunate exaltation of simple naturalistic, scientific research and "autonomous" morality, both founded not on the spirit, but on the "eternal laws of nature". Let's not even mention the identification of Rome with Judaism, the Old Testament as a collection of "stories for cattle merchants and matchmakers", and other similar jokes.

What's interesting, rather, is the curious shift of forces from one front to the other: a whole pseudo-ideology, which yesterday was in the closest service of liberalism, socialism and rationalist democracy, is today in the service of racist, anti-liberal and anti-democratic nationalism, and the new religion of the Germanic race. And yet, we cannot fail to recall the most precise antecedent of a phenomenon of this kind: the religion of the French Revolution, where fierce anticlericalism steered collectivist demagoguery towards marriage with the cult of the goddess Reason.

It's true that Rosenberg shouldn't be taken too seriously, and we shouldn't over-generalize. But neither can we ignore the fact that there are trends in Germany that are working, on various sides, towards a veritable involu-

tion, summed up in the formula of "divinized materialism", and as such far more dangerous than pure, flat, two-dimensional materialism. Whether the object of this materialism is "life", "race", "nation", "heroic-tragic" conception, etc., changes absolutely nothing and, when it comes to paganism, then appears the most serious equivocation, the equivocation that precisely the least enlightened Catholics and those most trapped in militant apologetics desired, to easily get the better of disturbing opponents and any attempt to lead them beyond their own limitations. Whereas the pagan world, in its highest Eastern and Western forms, was characterized by immanence only insofar as it gave, as something "present", a sacred content and transcendent meaning to every act, every institution, to every law of this life - the tendentious interpretation of neopaganism consists of a simple "naturalism", the old nonsense of the "forest" versus the "temple", of a simple divinization of natural forces, i.e. of the reality that secular science will come to know in its true, positive and non-allegorical terms.

But that's exactly where the neopaganism of Rosenberg and many of his colleagues ends up: it ends up - miracle of miracles - in views drawn, no more and no less, from Catholicism: not even high, ascetic, ritualistic Catholicism, but militant, sectarian Catholicism. It follows that this new "mysticism" that Rosenberg would like to offer the young Germanic generation is not only open to criticism insofar as it disregards the highest, universal and Roman values present in the Catholic religion, but also insofar as it is a falsification of "paganism" itself. And we could even show what sinister devastation the new, fervent apostles of the Nordic race have inflicted, with tendentious interpretations infected by the most modern prejudices, on ancient Nordic, mythological and heroic traditions,

of the *Eddas*, proving that they are the first not to understand them.

* *

In Germany's current situation, these ideological outgrowths can fortunately now be regarded as residues; residues of the left-wing revolutionary fraction. In terms of political forces, this fraction was liquidated with the death of Röhm, with the repression of the "second wave" (whose aim was national communism), with the disarmament of the assault sections and the predominance of the Reichswehr; in economic terms, the same phenomenon took place with the dismissal of Feder² and his replacement by representatives of a way of thinking which, admittedly, is national, but not "social". What remains, then, is the cultural residue of an extremist ideology of race and racial self-sufficiency in relation to any higher spiritual or religious principle, including Catholicism, resulting in illuminist, anticlerical and revolutionary neopaganism in the negative sense. It is to be hoped that this element, too, will soon be eliminated, and that, in the field of cultural policy too, a condition of greater equilibrium - the basis of all spiritual exchange and beneficial European collaboration - will prevail in Germany.

² Gottfried Feder, representative of the "socialist" wing of the Nazi party. Before Hitler came to power, the National Socialist program contained many of Feder's anti-capitalist positions [Note by R.D.P.].

VII

1941

**ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
THE FASCIST AND NAZI
CONCEPTIONS OF THE STATE**

It is generally known that there is one point on which the fascist conception diverges from the national-socialist conception: the idea of the State in its relationship to the idea of the nation. The aim of the present notes is to identify this divergence, to see to what extent it is real, and finally to envisage and specify the point of view that would make it possible to overcome a possible or actual difference. This is, of course, merely a contribution to a complex problem that merits more detailed analysis.

Fascism affirms the "moral personality" of the state and the priority of the state over the nation. In this respect, we may recall several well-known formulas of the Duce himself: "Fascism reaffirms the State as the true reality of the individual"; "For the Fascist, everything is in the State, and nothing human or spiritual exists, *let alone* has value, outside the State"; "It is not the nation that generates the State, according to the outdated naturalist concept that served as the basis for the official discourse of the national States of the nineteenth century. On the contrary, the nation is created by the State, which gives the people, conscious

of its own moral unity, a will and, consequently, an effective existence"; "The fascist state organizes the nation".

Mussolini speaks of the "people", so dear to democratic ideology, as a "mysterious entity", in the sense of a myth, something inconsistent; this is why he says that "can be defined as democratic regimes those in which, from time to time, the people are given the illusion of sovereignty, whereas true and effective sovereignty is in the hands of other forces, sometimes irresponsible, sometimes secret". Finally, Mussolini reaffirmed the spirituality of the State: "The State, as Fascism conceives and realizes it, is a spiritual and moral fact, since it embodies the political, juridical and economic organization of the nation, and this organization is, in its appearance and development, a manifestation of the spirit". "It is the State which, transcending the short term of individual lives, represents the immanent consciousness of the nation". "The Fascist state, the highest and most powerful form of personality, is a force, but a spiritual one. It sums up all the forms of man's moral and intellectual life". In this sense, Mussolini speaks of the state as a kind of "entelechy" of the nation: as a "soul of the soul", an "inner form and norm".

We have intentionally extracted these expressions from Mussolini's *Doctrine of Fascism*. They are, therefore, fundamental official views, not phrases taken from speeches made for this or that occasion.

Turning now to the national-socialist concept, we can again refer directly to Hitler's statements in *Mein Kampf*. However, an etymological clarification of the meaning of the German word *Volk*, which has several meanings, is in order: *Volk* can mean nation, people, community of blood and even race. "People-race" would perhaps be the most appropriate translation. Compared to the Fascist concept, the National Socialist concept is characterized by its

is characterized by the prominence it gives, not to the state, but to the *Volk*, the people and the race, to the point where the *Volk* becomes the primary element, with the state relegated to the background. Hitler writes: "The state is not an end, but a means. It is the condition for the formation of a superior human civilization, without being the principle that creates this civilization. This principle or cause can only be the presence of a race capable of civilization. Even if there were hundreds of perfect states on earth, if the civilization-creating Aryan disappeared, there would no longer be a single civilization on the spiritual level of the superior nations of our time. "We must distinguish with the greatest care between the state, which is the container, and the race-people, which is the content - Hitler continues. The container only makes sense if it can accommodate and protect the content: otherwise, it has no value". The supreme goal of the state is therefore to "preserve the original ethnic elements which, as creators of civilization, can lead to the beauty and dignity of a superior humanity". On the other hand, a state must be said to be evil and not fulfilling its mission when, "although of high culture, it condemns those who represent that culture, in its racial context, to decadence".

Naturally, there's a certain displacement of the problem here: we're dealing less with the state per se than with the human material destined to play the most important role in it. But the denial of the state's personality is no less clear, since it is conceived as a mere instrument of the *Volk*, the race-people. This negation is reflected in the denial of a real authority, elevated above the nation. *Dux* and *Führer* are usually seen as analogous terms: etymologically, they are, since the Latin *ducere*, which gave rise to *Dux*, corresponds to the German *führen*, which gave rise to *Führer*. There is, however, a difference.

First of all, we might point out that the Fascist *Dux* is head of government, but not head of state.

function of the Monarchy, which represents the stability and continuity of government, lineage and tradition. But even if we disregard this point, the *Führer* is different from the *Dux* in that he is - literally - a "guide"; he is less the one who dominates, than the one who guides and directs; he is less the one who creates, than the one who interprets and stands at the head of a "people", fulfilling this function practically by delegation and common agreement. *Die Weihe des Führertums ist das Volk* - a phrase that characterizes precisely this situation: guidance derives its legitimacy and authority from the *Volk*. This explains why the word "socialism", which rightly has a suspicious and pejorative connotation in Germany, does not have this connotation in Germany, if only because it appears in the name of the Party, which, let's not forget, calls itself National Socialist, in the sense of National Socialist.

It's worth following this difference between the two ideologies in terms of law. Paragraph 19 of the Nazi party program reads: "We demand that Roman law, enslaved by a materialistic world order, be replaced by German public law". To understand what "Roman law" we're talking about, let's quote Helmut Nicolai: "Early Rome knew a law still imbued with virility and ethical responsibility. But the mixture of blood and race in an ethnic chaos took over the first Roman period: then, dominating this now altered substance, strewn with Levantines, Africans and half-breeds, the Roman *VImperium* was born as an enormous, soulless state machine. With no longer any connection to blood, "Roman law" took shape. This law would therefore be based on a political unity external to the peoples, and which, from the outside, would dominate the peoples; it would have developed on positivo-rationalist and universalist foundations, with abstract formulations of laws as rigid in their letter as they were arbitrary and boycottable in practice. "In the Roman legal conception - Nicolai continues - the

In the racist conception, on the contrary, right is an eternal ethical greatness that stands above the powers of the state and cannot be changed by the state. There, what is considered right is what resides in the law - *positum*, hence "positivism" - here, only what conforms to an eternal legal idea is considered right. Here, what is legal is what can be justified to the letter; here, form gives way to content. There, the guiding star is paragraph conformity; here, it's conscience". This is not, of course, the general, equal-for-all conscience of jusnaturalism, but a conscience differentiated and conditioned by race.

This brings us back to race as the source of legal norms, and thus also of what is "positive" in the structure of the state. The result is a curious interference between law and racism - a racism that is even conceived as the hygiene of race. Hence the motto: *Verteidigung der Rasse durch das Recht* - defense of race through law. As long ago as 1936, the German Minister of Justice, Hans Frank, had argued that law is "everything that works to the advantage of the *Volk*", the people-race, with "anti-law" being "everything that is harmful to it". Flak Ruttke goes even further: "It is less a question of defending the race by means of the law, than of consolidating and strengthening the German blood by referring to the theory of race and the transmission of heredity", the active aspect of the measures to be taken thus being clearly emphasized over the purely defensive aspect. This is a logical consequence of the depositivization of the idea of law. Alfred Rosenberg once recalled this old Indo-Aryan maxim: "Just and unjust don't go around saying: that's the way we are. On the contrary, justice is what the Aryan considers it to be", before adding: "A primordial wisdom, now forgotten, teaches us that law, like religion or art, is not a bloodless scheme, but that it is eternally alive and well.

to a given blood, with which it appears and declines". From this point of view, Ruttke is right when he says that law must not defend race, but that the reintegration of law must come from the reintegration of race. Only the racially pure can have the right sense of right - right, of course, not in general, but right in accordance with the people to whom one belongs.

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In this form, there would appear to be an effective divergence between the respective views of Fascism and National Socialism on the State and law. Is it a question of opposition, or of differences that do not preclude the possibility of reciprocal integration and deepening of the two points of view?

We've already alluded to the shift in perspective involved in these differences. It could be said that the Nazi perspective stems from a revolution still in progress, whereas the Fascist perspective is more akin to a revolution already consolidated and destined, therefore, to give rise to lasting, stable forms.

First of all, both points of view are opposed to the purely legal conception of sovereignty. As Costamagna¹ recently reminded us, this conception separated itself from political doctrine by attributing sovereignty, no longer to a man or a group of men, but to the so-called autonomous entity that should have been recognized in the legal personality of the State. Basically, the legal doctrine asserted itself because it claimed to lead to an impersonal solution to the problem of power, and because

¹ Director of the political monthly *Lo Stato*, from which this article is taken [Note by R.D.P.].

the advantage was that the holder of power, whoever he might be, could not claim to exercise it on his own behalf, but in the interests of society, since the possession of power became illegitimate if the purpose was lost sight of. But despite this democratic interpretation, added by Michoud, the problem remains of the *form of* a given legal system, a problem that constitutes the eternal stumbling block of the formalist, positive conception of law. The problem relating to the *principium individuationis* of law, to the "sufficient reason" by virtue of which law and, ultimately, the state in its actual structure have a certain form and not another, remains unresolved.

National Socialism gives particular importance to the forces that determine precisely this form, which cannot fall from the sky (at least when it's no longer a question of traditional civilizations in the higher sense), but is created by men and races of men. From this point of view, it's true to say that state and law represent something secondary to the quality of the men who create them, and that state and law are good only insofar as they remain forms faithful to original requirements, and instruments capable of consolidating and confirming the very forces that gave rise to them. But this is also the point of view of fascism.

Fascism certainly does not adopt the view of impersonal "juridical sovereignty", nor that of "Roman law" as interpreted, most abusively, by the National Socialists. The state, whose sovereignty and primacy Fascism proclaims, is not something abstract or automatic. Proof of this is the fact that, apart from the supreme point of reference, the source of all legitimacy, constituted by the Monarchy - which is also not something impersonal and abstract, but an eminently personalized reality - behind the Fascist state there is the movement and the party fas-

cists. And this state is the revolutionary state, i.e. the one renewed by fascism.

If we wanted to find differences, we'd have to shift the problem to another level: national socialism and fascism both recognize a *dynamis*, a profound force that determines and animates the state, and is the fundamental principle of its authority and sovereignty. We'd have to specify the nature attributed to this *dynamis*, the *ratio existentiae*, so to speak, of the state in its concrete expression. The "myth" of national socialism in this respect is, as we have seen, race or race-people. We need to be clear about this, and not just mince words.

Let's take another look at Mussolini's *Doctrine of Fascism*, and in particular paragraph 9 of Part One. Having already described the people as a "mysterious entity", Mussolini repeats that "Fascism is against democracy, which levels the people in the direction of the greatest number, *reducing them to the rank of the majority*". He defines a qualitative conception, that of "an idea more powerful because more moral, more coherent, truer, which is actualized in the people as the conscience and will of a few, and even of One Alone, and which, as an ideal, tends to be actualized in the conscience and will of all. Of all those who, ethnically, draw from nature and history the reason to form a nation, oriented on the same line of development and spiritual formation, as a single consciousness and a single will". And Mussolini adds: "Neither race, nor geographically defined region, but lineage perpetuating itself in history, multitude unified by an idea, which is will to existence and power, self-consciousness, personality" - and he concludes: "But this superior personality is nation insofar as it is state".

Is this a confirmation, mainly because of the specific allusion to race, of the divergence? We don't think so. Fascism, too, made racism its own.

But we're not talking about racism, which is a zoological myth. Nor should race be

for us, as soon as it is misinterpreted, a new mode of appearance of democratic deviation or socializing ideologies.

The nation and the state cannot be a "race" in the naturalistic sense: this is affirmed not only by Mussolini, but by the most intransigent German racists, who recognize precisely, and without difficulty, that all nations corresponding to contemporary states are not "races", but mixtures of several races. Mussolini's vision is precisely this: there is a generic quality, which can be called "nation" or "nation-race", a quality which is not purely anthropological, which is widespread in all the components of a given political unit, but, so to speak, in varying quantities or doses; so much so that it can be thought that, latent and hindered in some, it is more present, more conscious, more realized in others, until it becomes, in an elite and in a Leader, absolute, pure, manifesting itself as precise consciousness and as precise will to power and existence. In a stream with an ethnic and racial basis as a lineage, and defined by the same line of development and spiritual training, this elite then becomes the central and dominating vein, the element that transforms and awakens, and which is, in relation to the other parts, like the soul as the force that animates and shapes the body, giving it consciousness. The sovereignty of the State and its primacy over the "people" and the nation are symbols for this action by the elite and a Leader.

In these terms, is there any fundamental difference between the Fascist idea and the National Socialist idea? Nothing fundamental remains, unless we make race, which National Socialism insists on so much, into a mythical entity similar to the democratic "people" Mussolini ironized. Even when it comes to Germany, what does race actually mean? We recalled earlier that German racists admit that their

people is also a mixture of races. The answer is: not race in general, but the Aryan race: and even the Nordic race. Hitler, in fact, speaks of an Aryan race that creates civilization and, more specifically, believes that the Nordic race - one of the six main races included in the Germanic mixture - possesses this quality in an eminent way. But here too, we need to get to the bottom of things. The Aryan quality required for full German citizenship, to be a *Volksgenosse* or "fellow-breed" with full civic and political rights, unlike the *Staatsangehörige*, who simply belong to the German state, can only be defined in purely negative terms: to obtain it, it's enough not to be a Jew, nor of a colored race, nor to have blood of these races among one's ancestors up to the third generation. At best, a clause can be added stipulating the absence of hereditary diseases likely to lead to sterilization, or the absence of the congenital inclinations that define "asocials" in Germany. But all this, in terms of racial purity, is too little. Will it be enough for us to perceive as self-evident what true law is, beyond any "positive" law, and to contribute to the highest spiritual elevation of the State?

What if we wanted to talk, not about what is "Aryan" in general, but about what is "Nordic"? We would then have to address the problem of selection, given that the German people are not made up of Nordic elements alone; conversely, we know that Nordic elements are present in nations other than the German nation. Yet no one in Germany has been so radical as to draw all the consequences from the thesis of the superiority of the Nordic race, for example by entrusting only Nordic elements with the care of the law or the work of forming the National Socialist state. And if the supreme hierarchies of this state are composed of "Aryan" elements, they are certainly not "Aryan".

not, to date, composed exclusively of purely Nordic elements.

And there's more. In a speech given in Nuremberg in 1933, Hitler himself clearly recognized that the Nordic physical type may not be accompanied by corresponding spiritual factors, so that in this area, the ultimate criterion must be provided by attitude of soul and spirit, by character, by works. Discrimination is therefore admitted within the Nordic element itself. Finally, we might recall what L. F. Clauss², well known among racist theorists and German champions of the Nordic thesis, said: we must not conceive of pure race in terms of collectivity, i.e. numerically and statistically, but in terms of purity of type: while all individuals in a given ethnic group can be called Nordic in the generic sense, only a few are truly so, those in whom the race expresses itself in a pure and perfect manner.

These latter formulations correspond almost word for word to Mussolini's regarding an idea that "actualizes itself as the consciousness and will of a few", although "as an ideal (it) tends to actualize itself in the consciousness and will of all". It will be said that National Socialism contains a specific reference to race. This is true. But didn't we recall that Hitler himself eventually recognized that the true and decisive race must be sought, in the final analysis, in the spiritual element? A closer look shows that the "race" of Nazi political ideology is a mere "myth" to which no precise reality corresponds,

² Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss (1892-1974): author of *Rasse und Seele* (Munich, 1926; eighteen successive editions), in which he developed "psycho-anthropological" theses on race. Clauss was a close friend of Evola, who devoted a certain amount of space to him in *II mito del sangue*, cit. pp. 133-141. On Clauss, cf. the biobibliographical profile drawn up by Robert de Herte in *Études et Recherches*, nouvelle série, 2, 4^e trimestre 1983, p. 24-26 [N.D.T.].

more or less synonymous with a people liberated from the Jewish and mixed-race element, separated from its pathologically condemned components, or whether it identifies more or less with the elites of which fascism speaks, those who create states and give form to nations.

Despite this, it's true that National Socialism emphasizes the biological aspect, on the one hand, and on the other, values such as loyalty, honor, direct, anti-bureaucratic dependence between man and man, between leaders and subordinates, limiting through precise political intervention all that is formalistic legal legality. But this difference will tend to diminish, since Fascism too has now officially adopted the racist idea: if this idea is consistently followed, similar values will gradually assert themselves here too, which can only be beneficial for our Revolution, still hampered in so many areas by "positivist" and "unofficial" or intellectualist scoriae, and by a style which, apart from the race of the body, cannot always be described as "Aryan".

On the other hand, it is undeniable that Fascist ideology can provide National Socialism with more than one impetus to move on from the dynamic phase still evident in its orientations, to a more "classical" phase, in which attention will focus above all on the objective conditions for defining a stable, "positive" order in its own way, independent of conjunctures and revolutionary turning points. Perhaps the very consequences of the war, once it has been won, will make it possible, by securing Germany's vital space, to set aside certain socializing *pretexts* to which the ideology of the friendly nation still sometimes gives in, for tactical and domestic propaganda reasons, and to arrive at a clearer and more Roman conception - but at the same time more in keeping with the best Germanic tradition - of the function of command and *ducere*.

VIII

1941

ROMANITY, GERMANISM AND THE MANACORDA CASE

Recently, one of Germany's best-known racists¹ was visiting Rome and asked us to accompany him to a conference being held at the Institut d'Études Romaines; he told us that we might be interested in the subject - *Romanity and Germanism* - and that the speaker had also been introduced in Germany as the person responsible for monitoring cultural exchanges between the two friendly nations on behalf of Italy. We were not a little surprised to learn that this person was Professor Guido Manacorda. We wondered if this was not a "conversion". After all, we knew all about Manacorda's background and favorite theses, and it struck us as odd, to say the least, that he should be called in at this time to talk about Germanism and Romanism. A "conversion", then? We gladly accompanied our German friend to the conference. And we didn't regret it. For we are here in pre

¹ Probably Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss (see note 2 in previous article) [Note by R.D.P.].

This is a case worth reporting, not so much for its own sake as for what it reveals.

It's worth briefly recalling Manacorda's "antecedents". He is a "Germanist" who, for a long time now, has put his uncommon erudition - and therefore his ability to impress the uninitiated - at the service of a precise thesis, that of the *fundamental Popposition between the Germanic spirit and the Roman spirit*; Roman being used here, moreover, as a synonym for Catholic-Christian in the narrowest sense. This is the fundamental theme of a whole series of Manacorda's writings. We refer mainly to his book *La selva e il tempio*, published in 1933² and republished at the end of 1935. The title alone sums up the author's thesis. The forest is the symbol of Germanism, the temple of Romanism. Manacorda's book was addressed to all those who "believe in the constructive value of criticism", claiming to "contribute to the clarification of some vital problems of our time". It is a collection of essays on ancient Germanic myths and on various German writers, in which the author, by means of fundamentally one-sided interpretations, tends only to highlight everything in Germanic traditions that has an inferior character and presents itself as truly irreducible to Romanity, interpreted, moreover, to fix this opposition, in a no less one-sided and tendentious manner.

Let's quote Manacorda verbatim: "The Forest. Nature placed above the mind; truth sought and affirmed in the strata below reason: unconscious and subconscious. Eternal becoming, eternal return, horizontality. Freedom understood as elementary disorder. Surface optimism, radical pessimism. Sometimes dissolution and annihilation of individuality, sometimes exasperated, atomistic, solipsistic individualism. Empirical activism;

² Cf. Guido Manacorda, *La selva e il tempio. Studi sullo spirito del germanesimo*, Bemporad, Florence, 1933 [Note by R.D.P.].

action for action's sake, neither causality nor finality. Colorful, tumultuous art, weak sense of line and construction, musicality. Pantheism, monism, immanence, secular religion, natural revelation; aversion to worship, liturgy and hierarchy".

This is the "Forest", the spirit of Germanism. Now to the "Temple": "The Temple. Spirit above Nature; truth sought and affirmed within human reason, under the guidance, light and control of a divine Reason that is both wisdom and love. Degrees, verticality. Grace cooperating with free will. Eternal bliss overcoming tragedy. Recognition of indestructible individuality. Finality. Strong sense of line, construction and measure. Monotheism, Catholic Christianity, transcendence, supernatural revelation, etc."

This is the Temple, the symbol of Romanity. "Eternal contrast - adds Manacorda - reappearing under various names and forms - paganism and Christianity, Apollo (or Dionysus) and Christ, romanticism and classicism, racism and universality, idealism and realism - with inevitable interferences, deviations and confusions, but also, it goes without saying, with reciprocal surface concessions". Basically", Manacorda repeats, "a perennial opposition".

As Manacorda makes no secret of his preconceived thesis, we can all foresee the results that "critical, constructive" pretensions must lead to in the treatment of the various themes. But it is with regard to the ancient Nordic traditions that the most serious ambiguities appear. Here, Manacorda pretends to ignore everything that a number of specialists had already established in terms of the concordance of the fundamental themes of these traditions with those of the "Aryan" cycle of all the main Indo-European cultures and mythologies. In fact, he methodically focuses on the episodic element, not the essential, the contingent and external, not the internal meanings. The extremely fragmentary and muddled nature of ancient-

The Nordic-Germanic traditions, as they have come down to us, naturally come to his aid. Günther's warning that anyone who really wants to understand Nordic spirituality should not refer to Germanic traditions alone, precisely because they are already muddled and corrupted, but should be guided by the purer expressions of ideas of the same origin that have come down to us from the ancient Aryan-Eastern, Greek and Roman traditions - this warning does not exist for Manacorda. He takes exactly the opposite path, emphasizing in every way the most negative and secondary aspects of the cycle of Nordic-Germanic mythology.

There's no doubt that he's following the mediocre tactics of a certain Catholic apologetics, master in the art of systematically discrediting and belittling other traditions in order to exalt his own. Henceforth, the gaze that can only see the "Temple" on the one hand, will only be able to see the "Forest" on the other. Nordic traditions are therefore essentially considered from the point of view of the more or less Judaizing schools, which are in any case flatly positivist, those that reduce all myths to "naturalism", stopping at the letter and the more or less chaotic images presented by the outer, "poetic" side of the traditions. But when it comes to the things that Manacorda holds dear to his heart, this whole aspect of a tradition is neglected, regarded as a symbol, a contingent expression, in favor only of the higher content, the "Temple". If these columns lent themselves to this, we could demonstrate that Manacorda systematically employed this tactic, offering a totally distorted, arbitrary and one-sided conception of Aryan Germanism.

It should be noted, however, that Manacorda's Romanism - or at least the Manacorda of the work in question - coincides more or less with a Thomistic, rationalizing and militant Catholicism, so it's less a question of the Germanic-Romanic antithesis than of the opposition between Christianity and Romanism.

tianism and all other traditions, seen in no uncertain terms as barbaric, pagan, naturalistic, ignorant of transcendence and so on. This becomes abundantly clear on p. 28 of the book, where Manacorda concludes a highly romanticized *excursus* on the content of the *Eddas*: "Poor myth, that of the Germans, if poverty, as I believe, consists in not knowing transcendence, nor joy. But had the opulent myth, high speculation and mysteriosophy of the Greeks known them? Or the contemplative Tao? Or the mendicant Buddha? All that is pagan is also, irreparably, joyless. It's worth pointing out that it's a "Germanist", a man with a reputation as a scholar and even a thinker, who indulges in such assertions, hardly justifiable in the context of mediocre apologetics for the most uneducated people. But we can guess, from these assimilations, what Manacorda had in mind when he reduced Germanism to the "Forest".

The second edition of the work in question includes an appendix entitled "*The Light of the North*", obviously aimed at racist Germany. We have seen that, for Manacorda, one aspect of the "eternal contrast" between Germanism and Romanism is reflected in the opposition between "racism and universality". In this appendix, the author doubles the dose, while using more or less the same method; he deliberately chooses the least meditated and most fanatical forms of a certain racism, further forcing their features through a tendentious interpretation, instead of considering, in racism and in the new "Nordic" myth, the superior aspects, likely to integrate with elements of our best tradition.

Manacorda begins by presenting a veritable caricature of the "Hyperborean" thesis: he completely overlooks the fact that the elements that most seriously support it are to be found in the most diverse and ancient traditions; he more or less makes the primordial Nordic race the equivalent of what race is for an outdated pangermanist myth; he doesn't even note

that, if we are to rely solely on modern studies such as those by Wirth or Kadner, the cycle of cultures of Hyperborean origin, having spread to East and West since the earliest prehistoric times, is so vast that it eliminates the opposition between racism and universality ; finally, to achieve his aims, Manacorda puts forward a purely materialistic idea of race, as if it were the only one defended in Germany, and he tendentiously contrasts the superior "blond" race with the inferior "brown" peoples as a whole. Race, then, is reduced to hair and eye color, as if racism failed to recognize, for example, that the brown Mediterranean or Atlantic type is, in some respects, merely a "variation" (idiovariation) of the Nordic type. Admittedly, the author reiterates the thesis of the Nordic-Aryan origin of the first Greek and Roman civilizations, and of the same character presented, to a certain extent, by the Empire : but always in a tendentious way, i.e. to give the impression that we want to discredit all that is ours with theses of this kind, and attribute any form of superiority to the Germans; whereas it's not a question of the Germans at all, nor even of the Nordics in the common sense, but of peoples having detached themselves from the same trunk millennia before the appearance of the Germans and the Nordics on the scene of history.

In any case, here's what Manacorda means by racism: "Under the species of blood, and under it alone, man can and must be considered, judged and raised as an 'animal' in the richest and most exclusive sense of the term. To speak of spiritual man means nothing". Referring openly to the theses of dilettantes such as Klages or, worse still, Bergmann³, but taking care not to analyze the particular meaning given by these

³ E. Bergmann, whose book on the "German National Church" (*Die deutsche Nationalkirche*, Breslau, 1932) was placed on the Index. Cf. J. Evola, *Il mito del sangue*, cit. p. 197-198 [Note by R.D.P.].

Manacorda adds: "The soul - *Seele* - is now preparing to drive out the usurping spirit - *Geist* - and definitively reclaim its rightful empire. Other characteristic expressions: "If, with the new training (for that's what it's essentially about), men of genius were to disappear, the harm, to tell the truth, would not be very great. Unless it's limited to mechanical rationality, we feel that intelligence is too closely related to cunning and malice, for it not to be preferable, all in all, to leave it to the brown races. Besides, when a man holds a sword, when his will conforms to that of fate, what use is intelligence? This is followed by further ramblings on the presumed characteristics of "Germanic" heroism, which would be dark and blind, aimless and restless, erupting from the troubled regions of the subconscious. Here, finally, are the last sentences in this series of "Studies on the Spirit of Germanism": "There is no reason to smile. This is not a comedy or a farce, but a tragedy. And in the face of tragedy, it would be imprudent, to say the least, not to pause and reflect. But wisdom teaches us to provide, so that catastrophe (*sic*) does not unexpectedly invade the whole theater from the stage".

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* *

Manacorda's views being what they are, we couldn't help but be surprised to learn that it's precisely this author who is now being "used" to fuel Italo-German cultural exchanges and educate audiences about Romanity and Germanism. It's well known that, in some cases, *raison d'état* is an *extrema ratio*: it was therefore conceivable that, at a given moment in time

fortunately overcome⁴, one could go so far as to take seriously these distinguished ramblings, in which the most unsympathetic polemical animosity of a militant Catholicism is combined with a bad faith truly beneath any scientific dignity. But today...

A conversion, then? In reality, we've all too often seen the case of people who, one fine morning, wake up racist, anti-Semitic and friends of Germany. We have to realize that this is not a conversion in the true sense of the word, but merely a strategic conversion. Basically, everything remains as before; only the façade has changed slightly. Manacorda's coherence is intact. But not ours, that of an Italy that really wants to get along with Germany.

It would have been dangerous today to take Catholic Romanity as the sole point of reference for denouncing the "Forest", immanentism, naturalism and everything else that Manacorda had attributed to Germanism. So, what to do? No longer speak of Catholic Romanity, but of ancient Romanity. Strategic conversion" is a paradox.

Manacorda had previously lumped everything that is not Christian into the "Forest" of paganism and naturalism, including not only the great metaphysical systems of the Aryan East and the Far East, but also the classical world. In his lecture, on the other hand, he endeavored to rediscover a religiosity and even a certain transcendental content in the civilization and customs of ancient Rome. He asserted that, all too often, only the Rome of war and conquest is exalted.

⁴The author is referring to the tension between Italy and Germany in the run-up to Austria's annexation to Germany. On this subject, cf. Anonymous (J. Evola), *Il razzismo e l'Anschluss*, in *Lo Stato*, V, 8-9 (August-September 1938), pp. 603-605 [Note by R.D.P.J.]

with its *pietas*, with its *vir- tus*, which is not only courage, but also fortitude and ethical sense: a Rome that contains something metaphysical, so much so that, in Antiquity, Romanity has had, for everything that has come close to it and taken part in its work, the sense of a kind of consecration.

That's all very well, and we were delighted for Manacorda. But we soon realized the purpose of the maneuver. The transcendence of ancient Rome was emphasized in order to create a reference point strategically equivalent to the Catholic reference point, thus taking up and reaffirming the previous anti-Germanic theme, and thus confirming the opposition between Romanity and Germanism. Indeed, when it came to the latter, Manacorda reiterated, with only a few softenings, his fixed ideas: Germanism means "forest", pantheism, primitivist and irrational relationship with nature and blood, exaltation of eternal becoming and eternal tension, Faustian spirit, obscure dynamism, love of action without purpose. Nor did he spare race: "What does this emphasis on race mean - Manacorda said verbatim - if not the primacy of 'nature'? What does this reluctance of the Germans, already attested to by Tacitus, to mix their blood mean, if not a kind of fear, the inability of those who feel they are losing themselves by spreading, because they have no universal vocation, because they feel they would lose all support by detaching themselves from blood and soil?". Manacorda didn't miss the opportunity for some tasteless irony: the Germans' presumed love of aimless action would find its best illustration in the myth of the Walhalla warriors who still fight after being killed (in reality, this myth refers to the forces of transfigured heroes that fuel a kind of metaphysical struggle). The very ideal of "fidelity", in its German form, would be proof of mental narrowness, a naturalism *sui generis*. Manacorda reminded us that,

In one version of the Faust legend, Faust meets a hermit who makes him realize the horror of the pact he has signed with Mephistopheles. But Faust suddenly remembers that he has given his word of honor: he understands that there is nothing more to be done, because one does not betray one's word, even when it has been given to the devil. Manacorda saw fit to make the following comment: "We would certainly have found a way to fool the devil"; and part of the audience laughed out loud at this sad and insipid irony, no doubt for the edification of the foreigners and, above all, the Germans present, who in this case would have had good reason to identify the "spirit" with the cunning and malice of the "brown" races...

In conclusion, Manacorda returned to his old idea, summing it up in the words: "Our conceptions are antithetical" - but opportunistically looking for extenuating circumstances, admitting that at different times each of the two peoples had found inspiration in the other. Thus, he recalled the Roman reminiscences of the German emperors, the Ghibelline sympathies of Dante, the influence of Albert the Great on Saint Thomas, of whom he was one of the teachers, what Mozart and Haydn owe to Italian music, and finally the role played by Hegel and Kant in part of our philosophy. Too little, in fact, if we consider the fundamental presupposition... These are merely interferences, mainly of a "cultural" nature, in the most superficial and profane sense of the term. In the political sphere, the Catholic Manacorda has found nothing better to evoke than the military alliance between Prussia and Italy against Habsburg Austria, an example that could not have been more shocking to any traditional mind: for we know that this was nothing more than a political conjuncture in the most materialistic sense, Prussia being driven to engage in this conflict by schismatic tendencies of clearly Lutheran origin, and Italy by liberal ideas of inspiration, in

Austria, on the other hand, presented itself as a Catholic, imperial and traditional power.



That's why we feel it's necessary to mention Manacorda's role as a spoilsport for German-Italian cultural relations: a highly revealing case of the carelessness with which these relations are still being developed. While we agree with Manacorda when he attempts to bring out the spiritual content of our traditions, we cannot follow him in any way when, to this end, he systematically discredits the traditions of others, highlighting only their contingent and problematic aspects. What's more, since it's Germany we're talking about, this is particularly inappropriate today, and not just from a political point of view.

To support his theses, Manacorda relies mainly on bookish material; although he has often visited Germany, he attaches more importance to the expressions of a certain romantic and confused literature than to what he must certainly have encountered in the Nordic soul - in terms of a sense of order, quiet self-control, love of clarity, superiority without vanity - by frequenting some old family of the friendly nation and reflecting on certain aspects of Prussian style. Where, then, is the "Forest"? Wouldn't we be tempted to see something similar in the instinctive, individualistic way of being of a certain section of our people, which Fascism is increasingly trying to "rectify"?

Just as Manacorda can only see the more or less rationalizing and Thomistic element of "Latinity", so he can only see the "romantic" element of Germanism, thus missing what is essential and com-

mun to both. It is precisely for this reason that his one-sided judgments are particularly regrettable. There are certainly aspects of the German soul that are not "in order" and, indeed, in relation to that soul, precisely, in relation to its highest heritage; there is undoubtedly something confusingly romantic, naturalistic, pantheistic in certain German cultural forms, just as, in ancient myths, tragic and "Nibelungian" elements, linked to the memory of certain events, play a not inconsiderable role. But all this represents a weakening and a deviation from true Nordic-Aryan spirituality; those who, following Günther's exhortation above, refer to the expressions that a spirituality of similar origin has known in more remote cultures, including the early Greek and Roman cultures, also recognize *another*, truer and more original aspect of the Nordic soul and Nordic traditions, an aspect that also belongs to the "temple": aspirations to supernatural clarity, elements of a "solar" and Ural spirituality similar to that of the entire Indo-Germanic cycle. In the formation of the Germanic character, these factors were decisive in depth: hence, as a reflection, this style of order, discipline, objective clarity and taste for action, in the existence of the friendly people, a style that only Fascism, in our country, has tried to change into a *habitus* among our people. On the other hand, German "professors", "geniuses" and "intellectuals" have often abandoned this style, opting for and believing in something Germanic which, let's repeat, is nothing but weakening and involution: suffice it to point out the falsifying action exerted by Wagner, with his operas, on the best spirit of the old Germanic traditions, and the influence that Wagnerism still exerts in certain circles, unfortunately. In other cultural fields, too, there are confusions, due to a lack of principles, which could give Manacorda's theses an appearance of truth.

Since this is the case, we could exert a truly corrective action on Germany, which is still subject to these influences: not to distort it, but to bring it back in the right direction. Provided we don't reduce Romanity, as Manacorda does, to a kind of synonym for militant Catholicism and Thomism, but deepen it in its Aryan roots; provided we highlight the luminous and "Olympian" expression of our ancient tradition within the framework of our common Aryan and even, we might say, Nordic-Aryan heritage - then we could have a positive effect on the German soul, helping it to truly find itself, thus creating the premises for a real and creative understanding between the two peoples.

Manacorda, on the other hand, went in the opposite direction: he set out to formulate artificial or, at least, one-sided oppositions, to emphasize not what essentially unites, but what separates on the basis of subordinate factors. In this respect, it represents a typical case today, which echoes what has already been pointed out in this very magazine with regard to a closely related field, that of the racial campaign in Italy. What we mean to say is that, in the delicate field of German-Italian cultural exchanges, we must be careful not to arouse suspicions of cordial sabotage, either through such *gaffes**, or through the distracted use of this or that more or less recommended person, with an established reputation, those "professors" and "Germanists" with indisputable academic skills, but who are totally unfit, because of their sensitivity, mentality and whims, to serve the desired purpose. It would certainly be undesirable for the authorities of the friendly nation to become convinced that we have nothing else to offer, and to draw all the legitimate consequences from this conviction.

♦ In French in the text [N.D.T.].

IX

1942

FOR A POLITICO-CULTURAL ALIGNMENT BETWEEN ITALY AND GERMANY

Those who really want to contribute to the German-Italian understanding that is so often talked about, must be convinced that it is now time, beyond the usual informal and academic exchanges, to break the ice, to decide to tackle the political and spiritual situation of both countries with courage and determination. We must start from the idea that both nations can help the other to develop, without either having to give up something of its national pride and tradition. In fact, seeing how our own ideas look from a foreign perspective, different from the one we are used to, will always be one of the most effective ways of achieving an objective vision and gathering the elements necessary for a fruitful self-criticism. It is important, therefore, to overcome the exaggerated sensitivity which leads some people to reject and loathe everything that "comes from outside", and by virtue of which it is believed that only the men of a given country should speak of things peculiar to that country. But two nations whose superior racial elements have common origins, and which are today

engaged in such an intimate community of destiny, like that of the Axis, must overcome this exclusivist prejudice, and therefore admit the possibility of reciprocal influences designed to rectify or reinforce one or other aspect of the views and ideology of each people. On the other hand, the new Germanic conception, like the Fascist conception, goes beyond the framework of a rigid, schematic ideological exposition. The forces of renovation and restoration are still at work today, and just as the term "permanent revolution" has already been used in Germany, so the primacy of *Bewegung*, i.e. "movement", has been recognized over all the particular forms in which this "movement" might take shape in certain circumstances. As long as we look to the future, collaboration is possible, an exchange of contributions and influences, to make ever more compact and homogeneous the bloc which, spiritually too, will have to serve as a crystallization center for the new Europe.

With this article, however, we'd like to move away from generalities and tackle a particular area of German-Italian relations. We'd like to consider the situation of the two countries, especially from a cultural-political point of view, starting by noting a significant divergence of views.

No one would deny that culture in Italy - from culture in the broadest sense to law and philosophy - is still a "*neutral*" sector. This depends above all on the fact that we have seen fit to give voice to, use and recognize people whose mentality has long been sclerotised by intellectual *routines** and preconceived ideas dating back to pre-Fascism. But it's absurd to think that, even with the best will in the world (which is actually absent in three-quarters of cases), this mentality can change overnight,

* French in the text [N.D.T.].

and that formal adherence to fascism can really become constitutive of these people. The fault lies rather with those who choose, letting themselves be impressed by "name", "reputation", "competence" and university *curricula vitae*, instead of aiming for the essential, without worrying about prejudices, and measuring everything by the yardstick, and that alone, of a revolutionary, renovating and constructive mentality.

This Italian "culture" therefore lives under the sign of "conservatism", in the negative sense of the term: yesterday's mental habits, intellectual automatisms, agreed-upon ideas that live on credit and guard against any revision, inert traditionalism. We say "traditionalism", not tradition, and we say "conservatism in the negative sense of the word", because we're not talking about the continuation of something truly original and ours: we're talking about the survivals of a relatively recent and particularly mediocre period in our history, the very "Italianness" of which is debatable.

In philosophy, for example, how can we attribute a specifically "Italian" character to criticism or neo-Hegelian idealism? No one can take seriously the historicist *alibis* that the latter wanted to give itself, claiming descent from certain Renaissance thinkers and other Risorgimento thinkers. Regardless of whether these thinkers are suspect from the point of view of the values of our most original and elevated traditions, or whether they themselves have been subject to foreign influences, no one can deny that the decisive factor in the current in question, which is still nested in various cultural sectors and national educational institutes today, has been precisely the direct influence of a certain German philosophy. This is how one or other of our thinkers came to "discover" German philosophy.

vir" in Hegel - a Hegel, moreover, impoverished and reduced to the absurd - the antecedent or precursor of an imaginary Italian idealist tradition.

In legal terms, the situation is more or less the same. Here, conservatism in the negative sense is even more tenacious and reticent. It still sticks to the "classics" of law, which are, moreover, those - almost all of them foreign - of the "positivist" period of the ^{nineteenth} century. The best part is that they think they're defending the Roman legal tradition. In reality, the Roman law in question should much more accurately be called Napoleonic law. It is not the law of the best Roman era, but the law of a certain Romanity that had already deviated, and was then adapted to the liberal and democratic presuppositions of yesterday's thinking. Where there is no question of French influence, there is once again a reference to one school or another of German jurists; and to say "German" is a way of speaking that overlooks indisputable cases of Judaic influence. We're in the world of a completely schematic and insignificant philosophy of law, characterized by a profound split with political reality and by the mechanics of categories erected as substances.

Yet, even in the midst of a fascist regime, the attitude of the vast majority of official representatives of our legal front is no different. This sector seems absolutely resistant to any revolutionary renewal. Despite all appearances, it has not decided to take the Revolution seriously. The conviction persists, whether openly or reluctantly, that there is, on the one hand, the objective science of law, unchanging in its foundations (which do, however, reflect yesterday's neutral, liberalizing mentality and have little to do with our traditions), and, on the other, an empirical matter, more or less a creature of necessity, determined by new situations, which will be taken into account here and there, but which must be considered, as a general rule, as transitory, as a "political" and not a legal reality. So, instead of assuming this

Fascist action, and discover in it the seeds of a new legal idea or the incentive for a real return to truly original forms, we add, at best, this or that part to the previous schemes, to allow them to survive, virtually unchanged. Technical language, combined with the enchantment exerted by this or that reputation, ends up playing the role of a smokescreen spread to conceal a strategic manoeuvre: a manoeuvre which, until now, in Italy, has almost always turned out brilliantly to the advantage of a false legal traditionalism.

The same could be said of a certain nationalist front. In many cases, this "nationalism" borrows outdated concepts of the state, the people and the nation from idealists, historicists and jurists. It is true that this nationalism is Italian in its object, since it defends Italy; but it is not Italian in its idea. Basically, it represents a continuation of the previous dominant democratic conception, and since its tradition takes us back to the Risorgimento, this is precisely what persuades us of the relativity of its Italianness. We know that, due to a fatal combination of circumstances, the unity of Italy could only be achieved under the influence of essentially anti-traditional ideologies, derived from Masonry and French Jacobinism. And those who wish to see things *ab ovo* would come to the same conclusion, for in the history of Europe, the nationalism we are talking about, opposed to the earlier, healthy and natural idea of nationality and to the aristocratic conception of the State, was not inaugurated by Italians: it was by Philip the Fair, King of France, whose work was continued uninterruptedly by his successors, with the subversive consequences we all know about.

In general, the democratic aspect is combined with the legal-positivist aspect in such nationalism. These nationalists profess, openly or inwardly,

a *non possumus* towards the idea of race, which in this respect represents a veritable touchstone: their nation is an "ideal" reality, historical and legal, in which there is room for everyone, Jews included. And when these nationalists are Catholic, the dose is naturally doubled: instead of a strong, articulate, organic, racial and hierarchical conception of the state, everything dissolves into vague, rhetorical formulas about universalism, Romanity, Latinity and so on.

Here, then, is a series of very specific aspects that bear witness, in Italy, to the downtime and "neutral", anti-revolutionary nature of im faux traditionalism. In its pretexts, it exploits a number of equivocations, because its points of reference are simply those of yesterday, and because they are much more influenced by foreign ideas than by our original traditions.



Let's move on to Germany. What immediately presents itself is a different and, to some extent, even opposite situation. With the *Gründlichkeit* (radicalism or systematic spirit) that is one of their hallmarks, the Germans wanted to carry out a politico-cultural revolution at all costs, sparing no area. Having swept away the most recent past, they wanted at the same time to return to national traditions deemed original. As a result, many of the points of reference still held by Italian "conservative" circles were liquidated in Germany. In the field of philosophy, Hegelianism and Criticism are in sharp decline in Germany, with only a few uninvolved specialists left. In the field of law, the "masters" of positive and public law of the 19th century no longer dictate the law. Well-prepared attacks

Wilhelm von Humboldt, for example, was not spared, and the role of Jewish influence in his nationalism and theory of the state has been demonstrated. On the very subject of the idea of the State, we know that National Socialist Germany did not shy away from revisions - in more than one case downright iconoclastic - of its previous traditions. The idea of race and race-people (*Volk*) took on revolutionary significance, giving rise to a new vision of the world and of life. We even take a clear stance against religious denominations, whenever they give rise to impediment or sabotage, whenever they provide weapons or pretexts for those who wish to hinder this trend towards revolutionary renewal.

It's a very different situation from that of Itahé, but one that often presents the danger of going from one excess to another - to use a German expression, of "throwing the child out with the bathwater" (*das Kind mit dem Band hinausschüttern*). The greatest danger lies in the fact that the ahemand revolutionary impulse often lacks positive points of reference, which alone could guide and justify it. Once the debris and impediments have been cleared away, there's a danger of taking the high road.

This is particularly true when it comes to returning to original traditions. It's a trait that distinguishes us from National Socialist Germany. Our "traditionahsme", as we've seen, is more or less a dubious reality of the past: with, on top of that, vague humanist references or to a Romanity whose original contents nobody cares to specify, or even to what may have been preserved of these contents in our highest traditions. The Ahemands, on the other hand, have no difficulty in leaping over the centuries, or even the millennia, to draw on the sources of their race and their history. They don't stop at the Second Reich, or even the First, and want to penetrate the mystery of the spirit and way of being of the Ahemands.

and äryan-Germanic origins. In this way, a host of ideas that would be considered unscientific fantasies by the "researchers" and "critics" of our universities play a very important role, both politically and ethically, in the new Germanic culture, and inspire precise guidelines for the systematic formation of the mentality of youth.

In this area, moreover, the friendly and allied nation does not always keep its books straight. Misunderstandings - which can be explained by the absence of precise doctrinal references and by the power of various suggestions - are neither rare nor negligible: there are even some that could jeopardize a serious understanding between our two countries. In general, to use a famous proverb, we can say that what has been thrown out through the door has often come in through the window: in the sense that 'those who thought they had made a revolutionary clean sweep of the ideas and idols of modern times, have often succumbed, in their interpretation of the origins, to suggestions and motivations which have nothing to do with the origins, which distort and alter them on the contrary, and which proceed essentially from the modern mentality.

Numerous specific examples of this phenomenon could be given. We will confine ourselves to a few examples. In the legal sphere, the aim was to create a new German public law, antipositivist in orientation and inspired by the politico-racial idea. The main features of this law were to be traced back to Germanic and Aryan origins. In reality, however, a double equivocation was created. In the first place, they were clearly opposed to Roman law - but precisely because they could only see the false, formalist, liberalizing and universalist Roman law whose true derivation we have already indicated. As for the positive counterpart, we've more or less fallen back on a variant of *jusnaturalism* or natural law, with theses that can be described as pre-legal: we've assumed that, without any positive determination or any form of authority from above, the sense of the

This reduces the legal problem to one of racial hygiene, since today, only hygiene, biological selection and, virtually, training can recreate a relatively homogeneous racial core within the mixtures that are now all historical nations.

When it comes to the general doctrine of the state, even more negative positions have been put forward. We know that many National Socialist circles were characterized by a polemical underestimation of the idea of the State, in favor of the quasi-collectivist idea of the people and *Volksgemeinschaft* (the community of blood as solidarity and collective unity): this was the opposite excess of that represented by the statism of the previous period. The idea of the Reich has been preserved, which, however you interpret it, does not fit in well with these new socialist views, but at the same time, the intention has been to put on trial any elevated form of authority and any higher legitimization of power and command, since it has been asserted, for example, that the legitimization of the *Führertum* - of any ruling function, of the *ducere* - lies solely in the people-race, in the *Volk*. This immediately leads to an arbitrary interpretation of Aryan and Aryano-Germanic origins, for it is not at all true that such principles were in force there. Even if we confine ourselves to the Germans, we know that their constitution was fundamentally no different from the Roman one: beyond the *Dux* or *Heretigo* as an exceptional and, as it were, supplementary ruler (similar to the Roman *Vimperator* in the military and primary sense of the term), elected by consent and acclamation, which could correspond to the notion of *Führertum*, there stood, among the Germans too, the authority of the *Rex*, quite distinct from that of momentary rulers, by virtue of this *Rex*'s reputedly symbolically "divine" ancestry. As for the Aryan world in general, we find no "social" right, but always a right articulated in degrees and, indeed, in

families and communities, even though these could not be ethnic stratifications, with lineages of dominators and subjugated natives.

Finally, in the battle for worldview (*Kampf um die Weltanschauung*), there was no shortage of similar erroneous choices. Certainly, here as elsewhere, we must pay tribute to the courage and resolve of the National Socialists. Whenever they have felt it necessary, our German comrades have not hesitated to defy either the Catholic Church or the Protestant denominations, without allowing themselves to be impressed in the slightest by the prestige their adversaries enjoy among souls. The most radical revolutionary circles have even gone so far as to proclaim the liquidation of these traditional ties, in which, in their view, suspect racial, political and spiritual influences are often at work; they have also asserted the need to return to purely Nordic and Aryan pre-Christian traditions. But it was precisely here that the equivocation of the new paganism became apparent. As we have repeatedly shown (cf, for example, our *Sintesi di dottrina della razza*, Milan, 1941, pp. 195-214)', this new paganism, for lack of principles, seems to have fallen into the trap that its opponents had carefully prepared for it: far from taking up the authentic ideas of Aryan traditions, it often defended numerous theses pertaining to "paganism" in the negative sense, i.e. to that paganism which never existed, which was fabricated, for polemical purposes, by the first Christian apologetics to discredit everything that strayed from the new faith. Thus, in the new paganism, we can clearly see themes that derive solely from doctrinal deviations or entirely modern intellectual rantings, based on "immanentism", the "religion of becoming", the "cult of life", a "religion of life", and a "religion of the human being".

¹ Cf. the new edition (anastatic reproduction of the 1941 edition): Ar, Padova, 1978 [Note by R.D.P.].

deist and pantheistic natural revelation, an exaltation of the purely organic, vital - we could say "telluric" - and irrational element against all ideals of clarity, "classical" superiority and so on.

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Naturally, we've simplified the picture. It cannot be denied, however, that in terms of dominant orientations, the difference between the Italian cultural situation and that of Germany is undeniable. On the one hand, a pseudo-traditionalist standstill; on the other, a revolutionary adventure. To what extent and in what form is reciprocal influence and rectification possible?

The answer doesn't seem too hard to find. As far as Italy is concerned, we need to make up our minds, once and for all, to take things seriously in the field of culture and, above all, culture in immediate contact with politics. We need to adopt a revolutionary intransigence similar to that of the National Socialists, to sweep away the "conservative" and pseudo-traditionalist coup d'arrêt. The particularly stubborn residues of the bourgeois, liberal and "philosophical" 19th century would have to be done away with, regardless of antecedents, household names and authoritative figures. The new Germany has not hesitated to detach itself from its most recent past, which nevertheless, with the Second Reich, contained so many precious elements, so many non-traditionalist but traditional forms: yet shouldn't such a choice be extremely easier for us, when we know what the so-called Italian culture and political idea were reduced to until the previous world war, when we know the abyss that separates them from the ideals that fascism, as a rule, defends today? We'd really have to make up our minds to do this, we'd have to vainly-

cre this kind of inertia and, above all, abandon all forms of superstitious respect for facades behind which there is nothing and for remnants of beautiful presence that are not even of national origin. Fascist contempt for the "convenient life" should not make us fear possible "trouble", even in the realm of the most delicate spiritual and moral issues, because sitting between two chairs will never be the best position for those who intend to build with courage and determination.

For us, this revolutionary action would be nothing more than an *opus remotiois*. Our great advantage is that, having leapt over the mediocre era of the Italy of yesterday and the day before, which was content to imitate the foreign, we are now in the presence of a truer, more dignified set of traditions: the Roman-Germanic world of the Dantesque Middle Ages, or the purely Roman world. And here, let's not be intimidated by the little phrase "anachronism". This is the usual pretext used by those who deliberately want to liquidate, along with the contingent form conditioned by time, the principle that gave rise to this form, a principle that can in fact possess intrinsic validity and always receive other expressions, in line with different situations. But at the very moment when we reconnect with our most ancient heritage, to the point of drawing from it a precise system of references, we would in turn be in a position to exert an influence, in the sense of rectification and reinforcement, on the friendly and allied nation: we could provide it with ideas and principles capable of ensuring that its revolutionary impulse, instead of being lost in adventures and succumbing to rather murky influences of a nature so often modern and irrational, would truly start afresh from its origins.

And this is because these origins are basically - if we look at the main currents running through both peoples - common. An unprejudiced study of the original forms of the

It's a fact that the Aryan spirit and Aryan law cannot avoid. But if a conviction of this kind is reflected in specific statements made by Hitler and other German race theorists, then the "anti-Roman complex" reappears here and there in political culture. Our task is to help suppress this complex, firstly by taking a stand against any one-sided, blind identification between Romanity and the Catholic Church (since this is precisely what many in Germany are using as a pretext); and secondly, by presenting the "Aryan" and "classico-Aryan" content of the Roman element in a direct and vivid way: either the original Roman element, or the one that adopted the particular, organic and imperial form of the Roman-Germanic Middle Ages.

In Germany, there was no shortage of men ready to move in this direction. Let us quote, for example, a few significant phrases from one of the best representatives of the new National Socialist political culture, Christoph Steding: "Given that the Roman state was the most typically statist in the Western world, and embodied in a certain way, with ideal purity, the idea of a Nordic state, we should not be surprised that it was regarded as a model even by men who relied only on themselves, like the Germans of the Middle Ages (...). And one look at the faces of our predecessors, thanks to the portraits and statues of them that have come down to us, can convince us that their 'Roman estrangement' undoubtedly did them no harm, for they present a much more virile, conscious and firm aspect than those of our contemporaries who would like to deny a good part of our German past" (*Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur*, Hamburg, 1938, p. XV)². Here, then, is a clear-cut reaction against an extreme-

²On this subject, see Chapter IX of Part I of this collection: *Function of the imperial idea and the elimination of "neutral culture"* [Note by R.D.P.].

This was the result of a short-sighted, National Socialist-inspired revolutionaryism which, because of its mythology of the *Volk* and its anti-Roman prejudices - all things Roman being presumed "foreign" - ended up forgetting the greatest and most important aspects of the Germanic tradition. However, our personal experience has taught us, and more than once, that there are German circles of some weight who would not be hostile to similar rectifications of their own ideas - if only because such rectifications, from a certain angle, will become increasingly necessary, by the very force of things and by the nature of the tasks awaiting us on a European scale.

But if we are to work together, and thus truly bring the two peoples and traditions closer together, we must - we repeat - make a serious commitment. Let's be frank: in Italy, things being as they are in the cultural sphere - quite distinct from the sphere of the political and heroic forces of Fascism in action - we're preparing disillusionment for the best disposed of our German comrades. They certainly don't need to come to Italy to rediscover, in reduced editions, the ramblings of their "idealism" and "historicism" of the last century, nor to take lessons from the "traditionalist" jurists of liberal tendency, with their academic and bourgeois mentality, nor to hear that Rome means universalism and anti-race, nor to find themselves faced with im nationalism tending towards democracy.

In Germany, the watchword was "*Deutschland erwache!*"; we, in turn, should coin the phrase "*Itaha, sveghati!*" We could then make a truly positive contribution to the culture of the friendly nation, and in this way to the whole of tomorrow's Western civilization: but only if we come to terms with ourselves, if we get rid of the dross, residues, habits and conformisms.

X

1958

QUO VADIS GERMANIA?

When speaking of Germany, it is essentially to West Germany, to the Federal Republic of Germany, that we intend to refer here; to East Germany, controlled by Russia, we would have to speak quite differently, and we will only allude to it briefly. As for the former Germany, the spectacle it offered in the post-war period arouses sincere admiration in most people.

This is a nation that has completely recovered from the untold destruction of the past. Even under occupation, it has outstripped the victors industrially and economically, regaining its place as a major producing power; unemployment and social conflict are virtually non-existent in Federal Germany; its economy has developed at a steady, unified pace, spontaneously, without state interference or heavy superstructures; its currency, the mark, remains absolutely stable and at a high level; the general standard of living of Germans today exceeds that - already high compared to many other nations - of pre-1939.

These are the characteristics that most strike those who observe Germany today from the point of view of economic and social achievements. But there are also

another, less well-known aspect. Behind the positive aspects, there is a kind of *vacuum*, spiritually and politically. A shift in values has taken place, making the Germans of this new Germany unrecognizable in more ways than one, and presenting problematic traits - problematic precisely because these Germans seem to be singularly lacking in problems. This is the - hopefully provisional - assessment that those of us who knew yesterday's Germany very well cannot fail to make.

The Germans always do things consistently. So it is with the democratic-inspired game. They have created a model democracy in the form of a "neutral" system - more administrative than political, we might say - that is both balanced and energetic. Unlike Italy, Germany, precisely from the point of view of a coherent democracy, has outlawed communism. The German Constitutional Court ruled on the basis of the obvious, namely that a party such as the Communist Party, which only follows democratic rules for purely tactical and camouflage purposes, its declared final objective being the suppression of all opposing political currents and the absolute dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot be tolerated by a democratic state that does not intend to dig its own grave. And although Adenauer's party is officially Christian Democrat, it is not composed, like the Italian Christian Democracy, of intrusive, incompetent and pusillanimous politicians. On several occasions, Adenauer has shown himself capable of preserving his country's dignity and interests with sufficient energy.

What is surprising about the Federal Republic, however, is the absence of any idea, any "myth", any higher worldview, any continuity with the Germany of yesterday. The very mention of *Weltanschauung*, of "world vision", is suspect for today's German, as we remember that this notion once played a fundamental role. It really does seem that

the vast majority of Germans regard the National Socialist experience as a parenthesis to be erased from their history. But it gets worse: as we have personally witnessed when meeting young Germans, these young people totally accept what Allied propaganda has asserted about the horrors and aberrations of Nazism. As if under the influence of a "guilt complex", they feel that the German defeat was the only thing to be expected. Whereas, after their defeat in the First World War, the Germans looked for all kinds of explanations, often even imaginary ones, for this defeat, firmly rejecting their presumed responsibilities and clearly sticking to the idea of revenge, we see nothing of the sort in present-day Germany. And although the finger is generally pointed at the German, the criminal and unscrupulous cruelty of, for example, the Allied air war (from the pointless destruction of Dresden to the tens of thousands of victims burned alive in Hamburg under phosphorus bombs) does not seem to have engendered any desire for hatred and revenge.

This is why no comparison can be made between Germany and Italy. While there is evidence in Italy, starting with the MSI, of a loyalty to the past and a determination not to deny it, perhaps as a result of the civil war, the same cannot be said of Germany. German and Austrian friends to whom we have sent Italian magazines and newspapers with a national orientation, have been literally stunned, declaring that something similar would be quite impossible in their country: impossible - let us emphasize - because of the general atmosphere, not because of penal measures, since we know that in Germany there are no laws to repress "apology" for the previous regime*. A German parti-

* German legislation has since evolved in a markedly more repressive direction.

cipant at the Predappio pilgrimage* totally ruled out the possibility of anything similar happening in his country, should Hitler's remains be buried today.

As far as right-wing parties are concerned, until recently in Germany there was only the *Deutsche Reichspartei*, which later became, more simply, the DP, the "German Party", a party so small that it is in the process of joining forces with the liberals to gain a minimum of parliamentary representation. But here, too, we encounter a characteristic symptom: although the term Reich was used in Hitlerism's own expression *Drittes Reich* (Third Reich), it nonetheless expressed a fundamental idea of the best German tradition, from the Swabian rulers onwards. For today's German ruling class, however, this term is intolerable, akin to heresy; and it was precisely because it had taken up this term in its original designation that the German right-wing party we were talking about was declared unconstitutional, as a result of which it had to change its name and transform itself. Organizations that are independent of parties and maintain the old spirit, such as those that were numerous and important in the first post-war period (just think of the *Stahlhelm*), are almost non-existent today. Refugees and ex-servicemen only have simple self-help associations. The few men who remained loyal have almost all emigrated, are scattered abroad, or are silent: even when it comes to people who had nothing, or almost nothing, to fear from the new regime.

As a general rule, the most worrying thing about the Federal Republic of Germany is the lack of national sensitivity, as evidenced by a number of recurring signs. One of the most typical examples of this is the success of the Alle-

* Small town in Romagna where the mortal remains of Benito Mussolini are buried.

The most odious traits attributed by Allied propaganda to the entire previous German political class are repeated and accentuated here. Here, the most odious traits attributed by Allied propaganda to *the entire* previous German political class are repeated and accentuated. It is asserted in no uncertain terms that Germany's defeat was necessary, and that to achieve it, to overthrow the regime, treachery was the only way to go. Saboteurs are portrayed, who do not hesitate to murder their comrades, pilots and officers in combat, whose planes they have sabotaged.

The "devil's general" in charge of the investigation discovers the culprits, but instead of denouncing them, he too prefers to meet the same death by boarding a sabotaged aircraft. Such a despicable work did not arouse indignation in Germany; on the contrary, it was a hit. Another example is the radio drama *Agamemnon doit mourir* (*Agamemnon must die*) by Beyr, who, unlike Zuckmeyer, is not an old anti-Nazi émigré, but a representative of the younger generation. Through a grotesque manipulation of the old Greek legend, he expressed the idea that anyone who, in the name of the ideals of fatherland, war and honor - ideals that would only be hypocrisy and a mere pretext - silences his most intimate family feelings, is to be despised. Agamemnon, who has followed this course of action in sacrificing Iphigenia, must die, and his wife, Clytemnestra, is perfectly justified in slaughtering him. In the conclusion, the author asserts that Agamemnon can be reborn in any age, and that every mother must therefore convince herself that he must be killed (the fact that, in the legend, the figure exalted as the ideal mother, Clytemnestra, betrays her husband, who has gone to war with Aegisthe, and incites him to kill her, by immobilizing her by surprise, according to one version of the legend, while he was bathing, to prevent her from defending herself, thus allowing her lover to strike him cowardly - all this, of course, is an insignificant detail in the eyes of the author).



Moreover, the lowering of German intellectual standards in general is confirmed by the fact that, since the end of the war, not a single book of any political, cultural or spiritual importance has appeared: yet another difference between the atmosphere of Germany's second post-war period and that of the first, so rich in existential tensions, ferment, spiritual and artistic movements. Thus, in Germany as in Italy, the fiction of those who believed in the existence, stifled by the dictatorial regime, of genius and creativity has vanished: after the elimination of this oppression, nothing worthy of interest has appeared. Successful authors are a few old names, people with nothing new to say. In the case of a few worthy writers, the change of direction is impressive. A case in point is Gottfried Benn, once a poet well aware of the "metaphysical" dimension behind the traditional idea of the Reich¹. Even more significant is the case of Ernst Jünger, who had been the anti-Reich of the first post-war period, the defender of the spiritual values that the experience of war can offer to a superior human type, in the very context of the most destructive and mechanized total war. Himself a volunteer combatant, Jünger had proposed the ethics of "heroic realism" in his famous work *The Worker*², and had advocated an era of the absolute person, capable of unconditional, supra-individual commitment, in a new union of life with elemental forces, beyond the values of bourgeois culture,

¹The poet Gottfried Benn gave a very favorable review (*Sein und Werden*, in *Die Literatur*, 3, 1935) of the German edition of *Révolte contre le monde moderne*, published in Stuttgart in 1935 [Note by R.D.P.].

²Cf. Julius Evola, *L'Operaio nel pensiero di Ernst Jünger*,

of individualism and liberalism; but this same Jünger, in his last works, is no more than a literate man who, because of the shock produced by the latest experiences, ends up in an aestheticizing humanism. And after having launched the motto "to go not into the sectors where one defends oneself, but into those where one attacks", as in a "tiger's ride", a mastery of the forces erupting after liberating and purifying destruction, here he is writing, in addition to a rough essay on peace, books such as *Le sentier forestier (Der Waldgang)*, which was translated into French as *Traité du rebelle**, and which essentially deals with the methods by which the individual can hide and defend himself under a totalitarian regime of the worst kind, as if nothing else were conceivable.

Volpe, Rome, 1974; see also: Julius Evola, *L'Operaio e le scogliere di manno*, in *Bibliografia fascista*, XVIII, 1943, 3, p. 143 sq; II° ed.: Ar, Padua, 1977 [tr. fr. *Le "Travailleur" et les falaises de marbre*, in *Totalité*, 21-22, Autumn 1985, p. 137-158 - N.D.T.] - Note by R.D.P.].

* Evola's reference to Jünger is obviously uninformed. In the original text of his article, he mentions that Jünger's essay is entitled *Der Waldweg*; the correct title, which we have restored, is in fact *Der Waldgang*. As for the French title of the work, it was chosen by the translator, Henri Plard, with the author's agreement, and for very legitimate reasons that Evola seems to ignore: "J'ai traduit par 'Rebelle', faute d'un équivalent français tout à fait exact, le mot allemand de *Waldgänger*, emprunté lui-même à une coutume de l'ancienne Islande. The Norwegian outlaw, in the high Scandinavian Middle Ages, had "recourse to the forests": he took refuge and lived there freely, but could be shot by anyone who encountered him. The Norwegian emigrants who colonized Iceland carried this custom with them (...) Jünger's *Waldgänger* is a 'figure', in the sense that our author gives to this word: timeless, so that it can and must be actualized at any moment in history; similar, if you like, to the figures on a chessboard, which find themselves in different positions at each new game, but which retain their identity from one game to the next" (*Note on the term "Rebel"*, in: Ernst Jünger, *Traité du Rebelle ou le recours aux forêts*, III° ed, Christian-Bourgois, 1981, pp. 145-147) - [N.D.T.].

When it comes to everyday life, everyone in Germany is busy: people "don't have time". There are publishers who reject manuscripts because they are "too big", saying that "nobody can find the time to read them". The concrete Americanization of life is, unfortunately, the counterpart of German prosperity.

Returning to the more specifically political sphere, there is something fatal and fateful in the fact that in Germany, the partly legitimate trial of certain aspects of National Socialism has ended up involving and attacking values which, in themselves, belong to the great European right-wing political tradition. We have often had to set the record straight with young Germans, when they claim to see the "rotteness" of yesterday's regime as the reason for their detachment and rejection of the recent past. The most elementary observation is that this "rotteness" (when there really is reason to recognize it) would never have occurred to anyone to bring it to the fore if, by chance, Germany had won the war. Breaking the backbone of Communist Russia, humiliating America by driving it out of European culture and grand politics - no price would have been too high to achieve such goals. The very "horrors" (reduced to their exact measure) which, in a climate of defeat, so upset utopian humanitarianism, would have become secondary, like those, for example, of the Wars of Religion, the Crusades, the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, indeed secondary in the eyes of those who believed in the ideas corresponding to these phenomena and who placed these ideas above all else. As for the rest, the young German generation (and with it a good proportion of foreigners) seems unaware of the complex nature of National Socialist Germany. Fascism was practically born out of nothing, due to the very few antecedents in ^{nineteenth-} and ^{early-} ^{twentieth-century} Italy that could have led to the ideal of the "state".

Nazism, on the other hand, drew its main vital forces from a pre-existing and still living tradition, Prussianism, from an aristocratic and military caste, and from many of the men and ideas of the so-called "conservative revolution". It's true that Hitlerism, in its populist sense, partly counterfeited and distorted many parts of this heritage; it's also true that some of its leaders and some of its institutions were deprived of their shadows: but it wasn't all down to that, for at the very *heart of* Nazism continued to act (often at a precise distance) valid men and ideas that one would have looked for in vain in any other country. In the face of this state of affairs, it would have been necessary to discriminate, to objectively separate the positive and authentic from the negative and deviant; but nothing of the sort happened in Germany. We lump everything together, we're indifferent or intolerant. We don't want any problems.

But all this cannot fail to have repercussions on the question of what role Germany can play in the physical defense of Europe, in the NATO bloc and all other related "Atlantic" alliances. Perhaps too much is being made of the potential that Germany could represent in the event of war: on the one hand, because hasty conclusions are being drawn from its economic and industrial recovery; on the other, because the traditional image of a military Germany is still before our eyes, admired unconsciously even by those who hated it. The backbone of this Germany was a tradition, a mystique of authority, discipline, impersonal service, combat and honor. But as we have already said, all this is no longer very important in West Germany - as far as we can see, this heritage is better preserved in East Germany (which includes the cradle of Prussianism), because the Soviets have not failed to encourage the dis-

positions to serve their ideology. We can therefore speak of a "*Helvetization*"* of Federal Germany. The following statement may come from a Russian observer, but it's no less accurate: the prevailing atmosphere in West Germany after the war resembles that in France before the Second World War - because of the primacy of bourgeois values and the lure of a comfortable, satiated existence. Unprecedented in German history was the appearance of cartoons that ridiculed the German soldier and officer - once untouchable figures surrounded by absolute respect. Added to this are numerous magazine articles that do not spare the honor of the German army in the last war, following an inspiration that even the allied countries have now left behind. There are, of course, cases where the Federal Republic of Germany has defended, freed and rehabilitated men from yesterday's army; but even today, trials against "war criminals" and the SS are celebrated, following the subversive Nuremberg thesis of the guilt of those who simply carry out the orders of their superiors, and distinguishing between those who served the "regime" and those who served Germany. As if, yesterday, the regime and Germany had not been one and the same, in a unanimous exaltation of the Führer and the Third Reich, an exaltation that even bordered on the pathological. And when the courts failed to follow or conform to these criteria (as, for example, in the case of the pension for Heydrich's widow), the mainstream press reacted very violently.

But when there isn't a solid tradition and an idea behind military force, this force, no matter how considerable or organized, will remain hampered in its effectiveness: spe-

* *Svizzeraizzazione* in the text. This is a neologism coined by Evola [N.D.T.].

This is particularly true of a human type such as the German, who needs a certain inner form and, unlike the Latin or Slav, is unable to give his all on the basis of a simple emotional impulse and the individual enthusiasm of the moment. Nevertheless, it is likely that, for some time to come, the automatic persistence of the form imprinted down the generations by Prussian tradition will guarantee, despite the official stifling of this tradition as a consciously recognized ethical and political ideal, a certain cohesion to the new German army (it is precisely thanks to a similar persistence that, in the economic and social sphere, the Germany of 1945 avoided chaos). But this does not detract from the fact that we do not know, today, where Germany is heading, nor what it will be able to contribute in terms of the most essential problem, the only thing that is important and decisive for the future of our civilization: the awakening or reawakening of a great new formative idea, spiritually and politically, beyond the neutral and contingent plane of material achievements, as the soul and ultimate meaning of these achievements.

GIOVANNI PREZIOSI
(1881-1945)
BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
ELEMENTS

As we have seen, the magazine most present in this collection, in terms of the number and importance of its articles, and the one to which Evola contributed most frequently during the period between 1930 (the year in which his journalistic activity is generally considered to have begun, although it actually dates back to 1928) and July 25, 1943, was the monthly political review *La Vita Italiana*. Evola began writing for it in issue 216 of March 1931 (with the article that opens this collection) and continued to do so until issue 364 of July 1943 (with the article *Corne la Germania lotta internamente contro la plutocrazia*)¹ : During this period, Evola wrote around *a hundred* articles² for the periodical, most of them signed under his own name, and from July 1934 under the pseudonym "Gherardo Maffei", and from June 1937 under the pseudonym "Arthos", which enabled him to publish

¹ Published in *La Vita Italiana*, XXXI, 364 (July 1943), pp. 29-34.

² Julius Evola's entire journalistic output certainly exceeds *a thousand* published articles. Around 75% of these are in the possession of the *Centro Studi Evoliam*, either in their original state or in various forms of reproduction. Of the remaining 25%, around 2/3 are articles from the period 1949-1964, generally published in little-known right-wing periodicals.

two articles a month during a particularly productive period of his life (1937-1943).

The director and owner of *La Vita Italiana*, Giovanni Preziosi, "was a free, courageous, loyal and truly honest man", as Evola was to write much later³. Perhaps one day we'll be able to seriously retrace Italy's political and journalistic history from the eve of intervention in the Great War to the definitive collapse of Fascism; then we'll have to recognize the rightful weight of Preziosi's figure and the role he played, a figure and role still little known today, because "exorcised" by occult and declared adversaries, Fascist and anti-Fascist, past and present. Indeed, there are no serious, historically consistent studies on Preziosi, apart from an essay by Renzo De Felice published over twenty years ago⁴. We therefore believe we are doing a useful job in providing some data on the director of *La Vita Italiana*, in anticipation of a more organic and in-depth study.

In 1913, Giovanni Preziosi founded *La Vita Italiana all'estero* (which became *La Vita Italiana* from July 1915).

³ Julius Evola, *Le Chemin du Cinabre*, Archè-Arkto, Milan-Carmagnole, 1983, p. 98. Cf. also Julius Evola, *Diario 1943-44*, Centro Studi Evoliani, Genoa, 1975, pp. 8-14. *Diary 1943-1944*, in *Totalité*, 21-22, Autumn 1985, p. 54-59 - N.D.T.].

⁴ Cf. Renzo De Felice, *Giovanni Preziosi e le origini del fascismo (1917-1931)*, in *Rivista storica del socialismo*, V, 15-16 (January-August 1962), pp. 493-555. Cf. also the rare work by L. Cabrini, *11 potere segreto. Ricordi e confidenze di Giovanni Preziosi*, Cremona, 1950. According to information in our possession, this book was seized shortly after publication (for reasons that remain mysterious) and the author (who had been Preziosi's secretary in 1944-45) interned in an asylum, where he is still locked up today (vengeance by "occult forces"?). See also, much more generally: Paolo Andriani, *Preziosi: una vita per l'idea*, in *Ordine Nuovo*, V, 3-4 (March-April 1959), pp. 133-139. We have drawn much of our bibliographical data on Preziosi from: Olga Majolo Molinari, *La stampa periodica romana dal 1900 al 1926. Scienze Morali, Storiche, Filologiche*, vol. I et II, Istituto di Studi Romani, Rome, 1977, *passim*.

after acquiring a solid cultural grounding and an uncommon theoretical and practical training in the problems of emigration and Italian communities abroad.

Born in 1881 in Torella di Lombardi (Avellino), with a degree in philosophy and a priestate until December 1912*, he had participated in Romolo Murri's Christian Democrat movement in Naples at the turn of the century, collaborating actively in the latter's fortnightly *Cultura sociale* (1898-1906), devoting himself especially to the problems of the Mezzogiorno, delivering lectures on social issues and writing, from 1906 onwards, several important studies on the question of emigration. Preziosi worked for the Oeuvre Bonomelli and effectively defended the interests of Italian emigrants, frequently visiting the United States and Germany for this purpose. In the press field, especially from 1906 to 1912, he contributed to the following periodicals and dailies, among the most important ones: *L'Italia all'estero* (1907-1913), of which he became co-editor in 1912, *Rivista Coloniale* (1906-1927), *Rivista internazionale di scienze sociali* (1893-1935), the fortnightly *II Carroccio* (1909-1910), of nationalist inspiration, as well as *La Voce* (political edition, 1915), *Corriere d'Italia* (1906-1929), *la Rassegna con- temporanea* (1908-1915), and others.

Appointed editor of Naples' *Mezzogiorno* in 1923 and then, for a short time, of *Roma*, Preziosi was forced to step down from the helm of these two dailies because of his tireless denunciation of the affairism and cronyism that increasingly corrupted Fascism. Isolated to the point of running the risk of being placed under house arrest, he returned to his magazine *La Vita Italiana*. Founded in January 1913, before and during the Great War it had adopted a distinctly Fascist tendency.

♦ Preziosi had indeed received priestly ordination: he therefore lived as a priest suspended *a divinis*.

nationalist and interventionist, anti-democratic and anti-socialist, particularly under the influence of the eminent economist and sociologist Maffeo Pantaleoni, a friend of Vilfredo Pareto. After the *Mezzogiorno* experience, oblivious to Pantaleoni's warning ("Be careful: one day or other they'll break your bones"), Preziosi wrote a series of articles on the persistence of Masonic influence within the Fascist party (for which he was reprimanded by the national leadership on September 8 - an irony of dates! - 1931)⁵. In the meantime, from issue no. 220 of July 1931 onwards, his magazine had become the *monthly publication of "Il Regime Fascista"*⁶, the daily newspaper run in Cremona by Roberto Farinacci, and was to remain so for twelve years, until issue no. 363 of June 1943, after which, with issue no. 364 of July 1943 (the last of the first series), *La Vita Italiana* returned to independent management. Enthusiastically endorsed by Preziosi - who had long been the driving force behind many of his magazine's hostile campaigns against anonymous, international capitalism - the friendship and alliance with National Socialist Germany in the common war gave him the opportunity to escape the marginalization to which he had been relegated by the Fascist high hierarchy. The latter feared Preziosi because of the mysterious and well-documented secret archives⁷ he possessed, which were said to contain "interesting information on the activities of the Fascists".

⁵ [The armistice signed by Badoglio with the Allies north of Syracuse (Sicily) on September 3, 1943, was not officially announced until the following 8th - Editor's note]. The measure was reported in *La Vita Italiana*, XIX, 222 (September 1931), p. 352 (note by G. Preziosi: "With discipline").

⁶ Cf. Roberto Farinacci, *Matrimonio d'amore*, in *La Vita Italiana*, XIX, 220, p. 1-2. Farinacci concluded as follows: "If I could dictate a motto for the Revue, I would choose this one: 'the pen and the whip'".

⁷ Cf. our note 2 in: Julius Evola, *Diary 1943-1944*, cit. p. 69-70. According to some unverifiable reports, Preziosi's famous archives ended up in the hands of the Italian Communist Party.

carried out in spite of everything by Masonry under Fascism, with very precise names and circumstances"⁸, especially concerning the complicity of Ciano and, above all, Badoglio. Appointed Minister of State in 1942, Preziosi then became (from March 15, 1944), after having given his full support to the Italian Social Republic⁹, head of the Demography and Race Office at the R.S.I. Ministry of the Interior.

The new series of *La Vita Italiana* (to which Evola did not contribute) appeared in Milan, published by the (nationalized) Mondadori publishing house, from number 1 (365 of the old series) of September 1944 to number 5-6 (369-370) of January-February 1945, the last attested issue¹⁰, which, among other things, analyzed the text of the declaration of the Yalta Conference, which was to give rise to the sinister capitalist-communist division of Europe and the world, the tragic consequences of which we are still suffering today.

Although he could probably have escaped the bloody repression unleashed after the last days of the war (he was safe in a friendly house, and physically known to only a few people), he was still a member of the family.

⁸ R. F. Esposito, *La massoneria e l'Italia dal 1800 ai giorni nostri*, Rome, 1969, pp. 377-378. Cf. also: Giovanni Preziosi, *Memoriale a Mussolini*, Munich, 1944 (reproduced in: Renzo De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo*, Turin, 1969, pp. 665-667).

⁹ Together with Evola, Pavolini, Vittorio Mussolini, Farinacci, Renato Ricci and a few minor figures, Preziosi formed the new Fascist shadow government on September 10, 1943, even before Mussolini had been freed (on the 13th) by Skorzeny (cf. Julius Evola, *Diary 1943-44*, cit., p. 58).

¹⁰ An issue published on April 25 (the March-April issue?) is reported by F. W. Deakin, *Storia della Repubblica di Salò*, tr. it., Turin, 1963, p. 335. Cabrini, *op. cit.* p. 349, who is said to have been aware of it, speaks of an attack against Farinacci himself (accused of Masonic activities) that was contained in it. In any case, we understand that this issue never left the printing press, in the form of corrected proofs.

Preziosi freely chose to die the Roman way: he committed suicide, accompanied by his wife Valeria, on the morning of April 28, 1945", so as not to survive the defeat of a regime and its leader, whom he had served so faithfully.

Among those who contributed to *La Vita Italiana* in the period between 1913 and 1926, let's recall a few illustrious names: nationalist theorist Emico Corradini, jurist Carlo Costamagna, philosopher Benedetto Croce, the great Romanian poet Nicolas Iorga, sociologist Vilfredo Pareto (who wrote in a letter to Pantaleoni: "It is not possible to trace the Italian political history of the pre-war and war years without the collection of *La Vita Italiana*"). In one of the last issues of his magazine, Preziosi had written: "I don't know physical fear, I have the certainty that I will win, and in any case, even dead I will continue to speak"¹².

Renato DEL PONTE

¹¹ Cf. our note 1 in: Julius Evola, *Diary 1943-44*, cit. p. 69, where several contradictory versions (including Evola's own) are given of the precise date and time of Preziosi's death.

¹² Among Preziosi's many works, apart from the Italian edition of the famous *Protocols of the Elder Sages of Zion*, presented and commented by him (first ed.: "La Vita Italiana", Rome, 1921; eighth ed. Mondadori, Milan, 1945): *Gl'Italiani negli Stati Uniti*, Milan, 1909; *La disoccupazione*, Palermo, 1912; *La Germania alla conquista dell'Italia* (with an introduction by M. Pantaleoni), Rome, n.d.; *Uno Stato nello Stato: la cooperativa Garibaldi della gente di mare*, Florence, 1932; *Giudaismo, bolscevismo, plutocrazia, mas-soneria*, Milan, 1941 (third ed.: 1944).